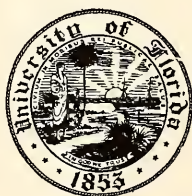


*E. L. Godkin*  
*and*  
**AMERICAN  
FOREIGN  
POLICY  
1865-1900**


By **WILLIAM M. ARMSTRONG**

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*E. L. Godkin And  
American Foreign Policy, 1865 - 1900*

**E. L. Godkin and**

WILLIAM M. ARMSTRONG

American Foreign Policy  
1865-1900

BOOKMAN ASSOCIATES

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# Preface

This is not intended as a survey of American foreign relations between 1865 and 1900. If some of the events commented upon tend to assume an exaggerated significance herein, it is mostly because Godkin himself exaggerated them. Similarly, much that is of importance, but which that many-sided publicist neglected to discuss, has been omitted. For identification of the editorials of Godkin, the writer has used Daniel C. Haskell's recent, admirable *Nation Index*.

After 1881 Godkin's editorials were written for the New York *Evening Post*. Of these, well over a thousand have been identified through their having been reprinted in the *Nation*, which by the terms of its merger with the *Evening Post* in 1881 became the weekly edition of that paper.

For brevity Godkin will appear in footnote citations only where necessary to prevent misunderstanding. All titled editorials listed are therefore his work unless otherwise indicated. The writer pleads convenience (*e.g.* accessibility of the *Nation* for reference) for the fact that the bulk of his citations after 1881 are from *Nation* reprints instead of the primary source, the *Evening Post*. To provide continuity where necessary, a number of references to "The Week," a series of random leader paragraphs in the *Nation* written by Godkin and his subordinates, have been made. This is prominently the case in Chapter III, which deals with a period for which records of authorship of *Nation* articles are scant.

Relatively few contributions by Godkin to publications other than the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* were applicable to this study.

The writer wishes to thank the following publishers for permission to quote from the books indicated: Rinehart & Company, from Upton Sinclair, *American Outpost*; Yale University Press, from Henry S. Commager, *The American Mind*; University of Chicago Press, from Robert E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self Interest in America's Foreign Relations*. For helpful criticism at every stage of the preparation of his manuscript, the writer is indebted to Professor Thomas A. Bailey of Stanford University. Professor William B. Hesseltine of the University of Wisconsin read and commented on the entire manuscript, and Professor Allan Nevins of Columbia University offered a number of constructive suggestions. Professor Robert Lee Blair of Eastern Illinois State College proposed useful stylistic changes in chapter IV, and Alice H. Bonnell of the Butler Library, Columbia University, performed labors beyond the call of routine in finding Godkin manuscripts for the writer. For patient, selfless effort in typing, proofreading, and the myriad of smaller details necessary to the preparation of this volume for publication, the writer is above all indebted to his wife.

W. M. A.

*Washington College*  
*August, 1956*

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“To be absolutely independent and detached as an editor, to spare not even one’s friends when they merit castigation, is to serve the State well but usually not to raise up multitudes to call one blessed.”

Oswald G. Villard

“People lend a ready ear to detraction and spite, [for] malignity wears the imposing appearance of independence.”

Tacitus



## Edwin Lawrence Godkin, 1831-1902

Edwin L. Godkin's editorial career spanned an era in American life. The rattle of Civil War musketry had scarcely subsided when the first number of the New York *Nation* appeared, July 6, 1865. The editor-in-chief of the new political weekly was a thirty-three-year-old Anglo-Irish immigrant, who held a firm belief in the value of moral sentiments and a consuming ambition to purify the political life of the United States. For the next thirty-five years Godkin strove valiantly and, as he thought, vainly toward that goal. When, at the end of 1899, he abandoned the struggle, an era had passed. The progress of the Industrial Revolution and the passing of the frontier had wrought great changes in American life since the Civil War. The disunited country with a semi-handicraft economy to which Godkin had come hopefully as a young man was gone; the United States in 1900 was a modern industrial nation—and a world power.

Godkin's importance to the student of history lies chiefly in the considerable extent to which as an editor he helped to mold the political opinions of his generation. His immediate circle of readers was never large. This was true even after he became editor-in-chief of the *Evening Post* in 1883. But his influence was broad, and, what is particularly important, it has been a continuing one. Today the judgments he passed on his contemporaries are perpetuated in numerous histories that his

intellectual readers and their successors wrote. Some of them seem almost to have regarded the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* as gospel—and their assertive editor as a prophet.

The *Nation* and, what some of its avid admirers preferred after 1883 to call its “daily edition,” the *Evening Post*, were “highbrow” journals, not intended to reach to the lowest common social denominator. Their appeal was supposed to be to gentlemen with high ideals and good manners. Godkin sought to hold himself aloof from the public tastes and from other editors; his “style and manner,” thought a contemporary, were that of “a gentleman in the easy chair of his club.”<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, hard-boiled editors were supposed to have read him and rephrased his arguments for use in their own papers. The apocrypha on the subject are great. Governor David B. Hill of New York, for instance, assertedly complained of the *Evening Post*: “I don’t care anything about the handful of Mugwumps who read it in New York. The trouble with the damned sheet is that every editor in New York State reads it.”<sup>2</sup> Hill had a right to be concerned. Godkin once remarked in a moment of special pique that Hill was “the worst man any political party in America has ever offered for popular suffrage.”<sup>3</sup> This dubious distinction the editor had also been known to confer on others.

Legend has it that Joseph Pulitzer once admitted that the *Evening Post*, under Godkin’s editorship, was his favorite daily. When asked why he did not make the *World* like the *Post*, he allegedly retorted: “I want to talk to a nation, not to a select committee.”<sup>4</sup> Historian Henry S. Commager has accurately described that “committee.” “They,” he wrote, “had gone to the best schools—one sometimes feels a college degree was a prerequisite to their club—associated with the best people, belonged to the Century or Harvard Club, read *The Nation* and *The Independent*, and knew politics, for the most part, at second hand.” He continued:

They recognized few evils that learning could not diagnose and honesty could not cure. They had the same abiding faith in the efficacy of moral sentiments that H. G. Wells ascribes to the English liberals of the period

in his *New Machiavelli*, and the English example was constantly in their minds. Good government, they believed, would follow automatically from the merit system and the participation of gentlemen in politics, and when they thought of gentlemen they thought of each other.<sup>5</sup>

Professor Commager might in addition have mentioned the Saturday Club of Boston, to which Godkin and many *Nation* readers and contributors belonged. To most of these men Boston was still the Mecca. They shared, incidentally, Godkin's contempt for western America. Like Henry Adams, who declared that "West of the Alleghenies, the whole country might have been swept clean, and . . . replaced in better form within one or two years," Godkin found the brand of individualism practiced in that region unsuited to his own independent spirit.<sup>6</sup> The westerner's economic heresies, his uncouthness and his all-around flouting of the laws of "civilized society" disgusted him. As he wrote a friend in 1889: "Your account of Southern California would have made my teeth water if it were possible for anything west of the Alleghenies to make any impression on me, but no scenery or climate I had to share with the Western people would charm me."<sup>7</sup>

But this is not to say that the *Nation* was read only in the East. "The gospel which Godkin preached," declared the historian James Ford Rhodes, "was needed much more in the West than in the East; and his disciples in the western country had for him a high degree of reverence."<sup>8</sup> Rhodes was one of them; every week, he asserted, he drank in "a timely and cogent sermon" from the editor. He was converted by him from the belief in a protective tariff to the "advocacy of one for revenue only." His "correct" ideas on the currency question, both during the "greenback craze" and the silver controversy, were given to him by the *Nation*. The journal converted him to the cause of civil service reform. In addition, he owed something to it for its support of an International Copyright Bill, its "sound ideas" on municipal government, its "condemnation of the negro-carpent government in the South," and its later attitude on Reconstruc-

tion. In short, the *Nation*, Rhodes thought, "was on the side of civilization and good political morals."<sup>9</sup>

William Allen White, another western admirer of the *Nation* towards the end of the Godkin era, was, like Rhodes, introduced to it by an English professor.<sup>10</sup> This pointed up the chief reason for the weekly's popularity among academic people — its high literary quality. But its influence extended beyond the doors of the English departments. In 1870 Godkin successfully sought a professorship of history at Harvard, but the position offered did not measure up to his expectations and he turned it down. Professor M. Stuart Phelps of Andover wrote him consolingly that in the *Nation* he was giving "weekly lessons in history to hundreds of college graduates, as well as undergraduates," and congratulated him on refusing the post.<sup>11</sup>

James Russell Lowell and Lord James Bryce were regular readers of the *Nation* and occasional contributors to its columns. Lowell, who, while traveling in Europe, was unable to get copies of it, later puffed up its editor with the remark that all the time he was without the journal his mind was "chaos" and he feared he had not "a safe opinion to swear by."<sup>12</sup> Bryce, speaking for American consumption, gave it as his opinion that the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* were the two best journals in their respective fields in the world.<sup>13</sup> But one of the finest testimonials to Godkin came from William James. "To my generation," James declared, "his was certainly the towering influence in all thought concerning public affairs, and indirectly his influence has certainly been more pervasive than that of any other writer of the generation, for he influenced other writers who never quoted him, and determined the whole current of discussion."<sup>14</sup>

Others, as will shortly be seen, were not so flattering. E. C. Stedman, for example, told Lowell in 1866 that the *Nation* was "well written for," but poorly edited. Horace Greeley, John Hay, and Andrew D. White disliked its captious editor, and with good reason. Richard T. Ely rated Godkin the number one enemy of his youth. John W. Burgess echoed a familiar complaint when he charged that the editor misrepresented his views. Henry Adams, although a stockholder in the *Evening Post*, was highly critical of Godkin. So were Brander Matthews and Harry T.

Peck. Theodore Roosevelt could not stand the *Nation* or the *Evening Post*, he said, "after a hearty meal." The press-hating Grover Cleveland claimed that after 1894 he confined his reading of the *Evening Post* to the joke column. There were many others.<sup>15</sup>

Despite his Brahmin ideals, Godkin was in some respects a precursor of the Muckrakers; his influence, like that of H. L. Mencken at a later date, was great among idealistic young men.<sup>16</sup> One of his avid readers in the nineties was a teen-aged intellectual named Upton Sinclair. Godkin and others had led Sinclair to believe that the basic social evils of the day were caused by individuals, particularly such men as infested Tammany Hall, rather than by a "system." "I had not yet found out 'big business,'" Sinclair recalled, "and of course I would not, until I had outgrown Godkin of the 'Evening Post' and Dana of the 'Sun.'" He wrote:

From the age of perhaps seventeen to twenty-two, I faced our civilization of class privilege absolutely alone in my own mind . . . . Such was the miracle which capitalist education had been able to perform upon my young mind . . . . It managed to make me regard the current movements, Bryanism and Populism, which sought to remedy this evil, as vulgar, noisy and beneath my cultured contempt. While emotionally in revolt against Mammon-worship, I was intellectually a perfect little snob and tory . . . . I expected social evils to be remedied by cultured and well-mannered gentlemen who had been to college and acquired noble ideals.

"That," explained Sinclair, "is as near as I can come to describing the jumble of notions I had acquired by combining John Ruskin with Godkin of the New York 'Evening Post.'" <sup>17</sup>

## II

Godkin, whom Oswald G. Villard calls the greatest of American editorial writers,<sup>18</sup> was not American by birth. Like his friend Lord Bryce, he was English in taste as well as ex-



traction, although both men were natives of Ireland. He was born at Moyne, near Dublin, in South East Ireland, October 2, 1831. His father, James Godkin, was a Presbyterian minister who had turned to journalism after allegedly being forced from the pulpit because of his support of the Young Ireland movement. Young Edwin got his early education in an English preparatory school and then matriculated at Queen's College, Belfast, where he took his degree in 1851. As a boy he was not in robust health. Although he does not seem to have distinguished himself in college, the young man was caught up in the intellectual ferment known as Philosophical Radicalism. Various writers have at different times stated, on equally good authority, his conversion to both the Utilitarianism of John Stuart Mill and the *laissez faire* economics of the Manchester School.<sup>19</sup> But there was a fundamental difference between the two schools, as Godkin sometimes recognized. The Utilitarians, theoretically, were "expediency" men, while the Cobdenites were doctrinaire worshippers of a set of economic "laws."

After a flirtation with the study of law in London following his graduation, Godkin went to work for a publishing house. Louis Kossuth and the movement for independence in Hungary claimed his interest and he took time out, at the age of twenty-two, to write a history of Hungary.<sup>20</sup> The following year he took a job as war correspondent in the Crimea for the London *Daily News*. That he considered his connection with the *Daily News* profitable is attested to by the fact that he continued it in one form or another for at least fifteen years.

The young middle-class Britishers of Godkin's generation who sat at the feet of John Stuart Mill and who made copies of Bentham and Grote their "daily food" greatly admired the United States. Some of them, indeed, confessed to caring more for that country and its republican institutions than for their own class-ridden society. They believed that there were in the United States no horizons to limit the social advancement they craved. The ambitious Godkin seems to have chafed at being excluded from the aristocratic British society he felt himself fitted to grace. Had he been born to the peerage or close to it, thought Henry Holt, he would never have left England.<sup>21</sup> This



feeling of exclusion, it is not unjust to say, is what sent him to the United States in 1856. It was also the practical sanction to his early liberalism. At the same time, the young journalist seems to have carried with him to America some high hopes for its advancement in the art of government.<sup>22</sup>

But there was one institution in the United States of which Godkin, in common with the English Radicals, disapproved—Negro slavery. He decided to see it at first-hand. Using copies of Frederick Law Olmsted's descriptions of his southern tours as guide books, he set out to retrace Olmsted's steps. His observations were published between 1856 and 1857 in a series of letters to the *Daily News*.<sup>23</sup>

Early in 1857 Godkin returned to New York City and resumed the study of law, working in the office of David Dudley Field. He was admitted to the New York state bar in the following year but practiced very little. He continued to contribute to the *Daily News* and to American journals, notably to William Cullen Bryant's New York *Evening Post*. In 1859 he married Mary Elizabeth Foote, daughter of a well-to-do resident of New Haven.<sup>24</sup> The delicate health which had dogged him from childhood now intervened and was an important factor in prompting him to return to England and the continent for the next two years. From Paris in 1862 Godkin furnished the *Evening Post* with what Allan Nevins terms "the shrewdest and clearest view of French opinion published in any American newspaper."<sup>25</sup>

Returning to the United States late in the year, Godkin became a regular contributor to Henry J. Raymond's New York *Times*.<sup>26</sup> At the same time he served as American correspondent for the *Daily News*, the liberal London paper that vigorously championed the Union cause when the military fortunes of the North were at their lowest ebb. Some of the optimism it displayed must be attributed to Godkin's own ardent conviction of the rectitude of the Northern cause.<sup>27</sup> As for the New York *Times* connection, Raymond tried to persuade Godkin to remain permanently, but the young Englishman had other plans.

All this time, Godkin, as Rhodes puts it, was "seeing socially the best people" in New York City and making useful connections in Boston and Cambridge.<sup>28</sup> In Boston one of them

was Charles Eliot Norton, then, with James Russell Lowell, editor of the *North American Review*. Norton, like Lowell, was a well-to-do Cambridge Brahmin then nearing middle life. A lesser literary light than Lowell, his pretensions to prominence were grounded chiefly in his talent for hobnobbing with important British men-of-letters.

For several years, Norton, Frederick Law Olmsted, George Templeton Strong, and others had been discussing the project of starting a weekly journal of liberal political opinion in the United States. Olmsted expected to be editor.<sup>29</sup> It was hoped by some that it would combine the best features of two English journals famous for their treatments of political matters and their pages of literary criticism, the *Spectator* and the *Saturday Review*.<sup>30</sup> A drive for funds was organized, and forty persons, mostly New Englanders, took stock in the association which was formed. After some heated discussion, during which the post seems to have been offered to at least two other men,<sup>31</sup> Godkin was selected as editor-in-chief.

### III

When the first number of the *Nation* appeared in New York three months after Appomattox, it created no visible stir in a country preoccupied with the problems of post-war demobilization and reconstruction. The editor-in-chief of the new weekly devoted to "politics, literature, science, and art," besides being unknown to the public, was not particularly well liked in eastern literary circles. The publisher's prospectus promised readers that the *Nation* would be the organ of no political group and that it would in a "really critical spirit" wage war on the exaggerations characteristic of the political writing of the day. It announced to the world that the journal would espouse "true democratic principles" both in society and government and would advocate a more even distribution of the fruits of progress. The prospectus emphasized, too, the political importance of popular education and promised to keep the subject before its readers.<sup>32</sup>

A majority of the initial stockholders of the *Nation* were Abolitionists and Radical Republicans. Their influence was reflected in the attention given in the prospectus to the condition of

the Negro freedmen and in the stated necessity for "the removal of all artificial distinctions between them and the rest of the population." A second influence, one which immediately caused some friction among the stockholders, was that of the English classical economy. Many thinking men of Godkin's generation, including some *Nation* stockholders, had once embraced Ricardo and James Mill only to become appalled at the sight of Mill's Economic Man in action. Not so Godkin. With characteristic single-mindedness of purpose, he set to work to wed the *Nation* to the "dismal" tenets of classical economy.<sup>33</sup>

A listing of the *Nation's* contributors over the next generation and a half would approximate a kind of "Who's Who in Intellectual America," yet the story gained credence that Godkin wrote all or nearly all the journal himself. This was because it was regarded by its admirers as an example of personal journalism of a high order and because its contributions were unsigned. Its views came to be so closely identified with those of its editor that, as Bryce remarked, with those who knew of him it was usually "Godkin says," rather than "the *Nation* says."<sup>34</sup>

Godkin probably did, as his overworked associate Wendell Phillips Garrison assures us, sometimes write as many as three to five pages a week for the *Nation*. But much that has been attributed to his pen was the work of others. Richard Dennett, a brilliant young journalist whose career was cut short by death in 1874, was a regular staff member for nine years. Arthur G. Sedgwick began contributing in the 1860's, although he did not join the regular staff until 1872.<sup>35</sup> Sedgwick, whose relations with Godkin over a period of some thirty years seem to have been as close as anyone's, relates that Dennett really wrote the *Nation* in "enormous quantities." He wrote innumerable paragraphs for "The Week," says Sedgwick, book reviews of "remarkable originality," political editorials ("he had an extraordinary amount of knowledge of the details of contemporary politics"), and articles on social matters.<sup>36</sup> Sedgwick, in his own production, does not suffer by comparison. Almost as versatile as Dennett, he wrote hundreds of political editorials, social and legal articles, literary notices and book reviews, besides contributing to "The Week."<sup>37</sup>

From the beginning, the *Nation's* literary notices and reviews were among its chief merits. The credit for this belongs, not to Godkin as some have supposed, but to its long-time literary editor, Wendell Phillips Garrison. The wealthy Philadelphia Abolitionist, James McKim, in contributing heavily to the founding of the *Nation*, had been motivated not merely by his interest in the welfare of the freedmen; he wanted to create a suitable editorial position for his son-in-law to be, Wendell Phillips Garrison, the third son of the great Abolitionist. It was a fortuitous bit of nepotism that brought young Garrison, recently out of Harvard, to the *Nation* office. Dissimilar—conveniently so—in temperament, Godkin and his strangely self-effacing subordinate formed an editorial team that functioned harmoniously throughout thirty-five years of close association.<sup>38</sup>

Garrison was Godkin's strong right arm. Godkin once wrote him: "If anything goes wrong with you, I will retire into a monastery."<sup>39</sup> The volatile editor-in-chief was continually being sued for libel, and it was Garrison who insured in advance that most of these suits would be unsuccessful. Verification is supposed to have been a religion with him; his close attention to detail and painstaking accuracy stamped him, reported Godkin admirer Rollo Ogden, as the dike-builder who held back the "mighty flood" of Godkin's argument, lest it burst its banks. Aside from his regular duties, Garrison ran the *Nation* in the absence of its editor-in-chief and wrote editorials and contributions to "The Week." As literary editor he set standards for the journal that his successors were hard-pressed to maintain.

One of the most prolific contributors to the *Nation* was Charles S. Peirce, the forerunner of John Dewey and Instrumentalism. Although Peirce's interest centered on the logic of the idea of relatives, his facile mind and pen ranged over a variety of scientific and philosophic questions for nearly twenty years in the weekly. William James wrote much for it, as did his equally famous brother Henry. So did the noted economist Professor F. W. Taussig, who began to write for the *Nation* in 1880. This was twelve years after Asa Gray, the well-known botanist and authority on Darwinian evolution, first joined the ranks of its contributors, and fourteen years after President

Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University published his first scientific article in it. William Dean Howells was a staff member for a year, and William Graham Sumner used its columns to argue his and Godkin's views on the tariff and on bimetallism.<sup>40</sup>

Nearly every American historian of importance in the late nineteenth century contributed in some way to the *Nation*. Some, like James Schouler, Francis Parkman, and Rhodes, gave money.<sup>41</sup> A trio remarkable for their versatility, Henry C. Lea, Goldwin Smith, and John Fiske, aired their opinions on a variety of topics in frequent articles and reviews for the *Nation*. Hermann Eduard Von Holst, A. V. Dicey, and Friedrich Kapp furnished dispatches from Europe. John Codman Ropes wrote on military history. Worthington C. Ford, H. B. Adams, Justin Winsor, and A. B. Hart were occasional contributors. Ellis P. Oberholzer did not contribute to the Godkin *Nation* but was a staunch admirer of the editor.<sup>42</sup>

Besides historians, men of affairs were well represented. Charles Francis Adams, Jr., contributed frequent articles between 1870 and 1882, mostly dealing with the railroads. David A. Wells, former special commissioner of the revenue and a leading authority on tariff reform, wrote on the internal revenue and the powers of the Secretary of the Treasury. General J. D. Cox, President Grant's ill-used Secretary of the Interior, wrote editorials and reviews of books chiefly on military affairs. There were, of course, many others.<sup>43</sup>

#### IV

In the *Nation* Godkin proposed to implement some convictions as to the proper role of the press in a democratic society. His writings on that subject are voluminous. All reflect his political bent. "The principal functions of the press under a popular government," he early wrote, "are two in number—the supply of news and the criticism of the government." He continued:

Not the "he-has-made-mistakes-as-who-has-not" style of criticism, but the incessant, vigilant, remorseless turning over, day by day, of the acts of men in power, with



a view to calling the attention of the public to all sins of negligence, or ignorance, or intention, which anybody entrusted with authority may have committed or may be proposing to commit, and the commendation to the public favor of such measures, passed or suggested, as the editor may deem commendable.<sup>44</sup>

Godkin conceded that it was possible for a public figure to receive unfair treatment from the press. But the "defense of public men against carping critics who never have any facts to support their judgments, and never have anything to propose in place of what they condemn, lies in the fact that the public speedily finds them out and will not buy their papers."<sup>45</sup>

Statements such as these returned at a later date to plague the editor. On several occasions his editorial campaigns cost him so many readers that the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* were nearly ruined.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, one of Godkin's associates is reported to have chortled with glee whenever a new batch was lost. Godkin himself treated complainants as personal adversaries. To some of them he would address sarcastic notes informing them that, since it was obvious from their complaint that they were in special need of instruction, he would continue to send them the paper. Others were singled out by name for special treatment (ridicule) in the *Nation*.<sup>47</sup>

A major complaint against the press in 1865 was that it was clamorously partisan. This was because editors were either "beggars on horseback" or *parvenus*, which was worse. At least so thought the snobbish James Russell Lowell (probably with Horace Greeley in mind). The journal which made overtures towards political independence was virtually non-existent. Godkin assured his readers that he would set to work to correct this. In 1869, editorializing on the journalistic services of Henry J. Raymond, he indicated his opinion of the press of his day. Under Raymond, he noted, the *Times* "encouraged truthfulness—the reproduction of facts uncolored by the necessities of 'a cause' or by the editor's personal feelings . . . ." In so doing it had helped to abate the "greatest nuisance of the age, the coarseness, violence, calumny, which does so much to drive

sensible and high-minded and competent men out of public life or keep them from entering it.”<sup>48</sup>

Within a matter of weeks of its founding, Godkin was able to turn the *Nation* from the path of radical social reform envisioned for it by some of its more farsighted sponsors. The extent to which they were overridden was suggested by his jocular remark to his friend Charles Eliot Norton that he was “afraid to visit Boston this winter, lest the stockholders of the *Nation* should lynch me.”<sup>49</sup> One of them, Wendell Phillips, he forthwith made chief “whipping boy” in his columns.<sup>50</sup>

By 1866 Godkin—he was now by reorganization the principal proprietor of the *Nation*—could write: “I have come to the conclusion that the narrowest of all human beings are your ‘progressive radicals.’ They ‘progress’ as I have seen many mules progress, by a succession of kicks and squeals which make traveling on the same road with them perilous and disagreeable work.”<sup>51</sup> Before long he was on a wholly different road from theirs. A case in point was his Negro policy. Despite the fact that the *Nation* had been considered at its inception a freedman’s organ, Godkin urged in 1865 that the Negro be denied the vote until he could pass both an educational and a *moral* test. By 1877 he was telling Norton: “I do not see . . . how the negro is ever to be worked into a system of government for which you and I would have much respect.”<sup>52</sup>

Godkin’s much publicized editorial independence should not be exaggerated. He was constantly under pressure from his more liberal associates to modify his reactionary views in print, and frequently he acceded to their demands. Thus in 1865 Charles Eliot Norton drew the following reply to a letter in which he had informed Godkin that he would not print an article postulating Negro inequality in the *North American Review*: “I shall recast all I have said about the negroes, and put it in a shape which will not clash with your own opinions and those of the *Review*.”<sup>53</sup>

The *Nation*, in line with its Radical antecedents, at first advocated severe treatment of the prostrate South; later it asserted its intention of steering a middle course between the supporters of President Johnson’s mild Reconstruction policy and

the Radicals in Congress. But because of numerous editorial inconsistencies the attitude of its editor was at no stage very well defined. A case in point was the Johnson impeachment proceeding. Godkin originally opposed it, then became hardly less vehement than the Radical New York *Tribune* in calling for the scalp of the President. Yet when the acquittal came, he viewed it as a vindication of the law. Later, in the Grant administration, he broke completely with the Radicals. He began to attack carpet-baggers and he called for the restoration of civil government in the South.<sup>54</sup> By 1877, Godkin, as Roger W. Shugg has pointed out, had changed his mind to such a degree as to view with satisfaction the triumph of the Southern Conservatives.<sup>55</sup>

Despite his early identification with the Radical press, Godkin was unstinting in his attacks on Radical leaders from the beginning. One whom he particularly disliked was General Benjamin F. Butler, a leading Congressional supporter of George H. Pendleton's scheme for paying off the Civil War bond issues in greenbacks. Inasmuch as the bonds had been bought with these depreciated dollars in the first place, Butler's position was a fairly tenable one; the holders of the bonds stood to gain as much as double their value if they were paid back in gold dollars. Nevertheless Godkin viewed the Ohio Idea, as it was called, as a "monstrous swindle." If the "repudiationists" should succeed in their nefarious scheme, cried the *Nation* in January, 1868, they would go down in history as "the most muscular and long-winded, most ingenious and bare-faced of the great historical knaves." The scheme, readers of the *Nation* were assured, "far surpasses the old medieval plan of adulterating and clipping the coinage . . ."<sup>56</sup>

Godkin had both admiration and support for Ulysses S. Grant in 1868.<sup>57</sup> But the President's assurance of renomination in 1872 was the signal for open revolt within the Republican party. It had been brewing for some months. Godkin, who was one of the early malcontents, hoped that the seceders would nominate Charles Francis Adams. He was dumfounded when the Liberal Republicans, as they were called, chose instead the high tariff advocate Horace Greeley. He had disliked the in-



fluent editor of the *Tribune* almost from the beginning, and now he set to work with a vengeance to help defeat him.<sup>58</sup> Grant was easily re-elected — a result that Allan Nevins claims Godkin's pen "did more than that of any other writer" to bring about.<sup>59</sup>

Four years later, with the scandals of the Grant Administration fresh before him, Godkin supported the candidacy of Grant's successor, Hayes, with a good many reservations. Moreover, the circumstances of that disputed election led him to question Hayes' moral right to accept the Presidency. Taking this unpopular course is supposed to have cost the *Nation* nearly half of its 13,000 subscribers.<sup>60</sup> It never again in the Godkin era approached that peak in circulation. Nevertheless Godkin was consulted about the cabinet to be formed by the new President.<sup>61</sup> The following year he was gratified to note Hayes' promise of a reform of the Civil Service. But when it became evident that the President did not intend to go as far with it as Godkin wished, the editor made him a target for repeated criticism in the *Nation*.<sup>62</sup>

James A. Garfield thought that Godkin was "cynical, partisan and unjust."<sup>63</sup> The editor, in turn, backed him in 1880 without enthusiasm. One fear, which arose from the choice of Arthur as running mate, he dismissed however. The possibility of Garfield's dying in office, the *Nation* assured its readers, was "too unlikely a contingency to be worth making extraordinary provision for."<sup>64</sup> When the unforeseen occurred, Godkin was not as dismayed as might have been expected. He soon found cause to comment favorably on the conduct of Arthur as Chief Executive.<sup>65</sup>

## V

On May 25, 1881, the New York *Evening Post* announced its sale. The Free Trade newspaper that Alexander Hamilton had founded as a Federalist organ in 1801 had been bought, it was reported, by E. L. Godkin, Horace White, and Carl Schurz. Horace White was the former editor of the *Chicago Tribune* and a reputed financial authority, who for several years had been associated with Henry Villard in Villard's finan-

cial enterprises. Carl Schurz, the German liberal who came to the United States in 1852 and rose to modest stature in Northern councils during the Civil War, had just completed a term as Secretary of the Interior under President Hayes. Few knew it at the time but the real ownership of the *Evening Post* was elsewhere; the actual purchaser was Villard, the German immigrant to the United States who had made a fortune in railroad building activity.

Godkin was given some stock in the company and an associate editorship, in return for which he transferred ownership of the *Nation* to the *Evening Post* Company. The *Nation* henceforth, it was agreed, would appear as the weekly edition of the *Post*. Wendell Phillips Garrison became officially editor-in-chief of the weekly, but Godkin (Oswald G. Villard to the contrary) did not surrender his control. Garrison's status on the *Nation* vis-à-vis his old chief remained in his own words that of "junior partner," or, as he told William Roscoe Thayer, "limited monarchy."<sup>66</sup>

The new arrangement required no sacrifice of principle on Godkin's part. Villard's politics were more or less those of the new "owners" of the *Nation* and the *Evening Post*, and it was insured that there would be a minimum of interference by him with their running of the papers.<sup>67</sup> The *Nation* and the *Evening Post* had always had a good deal in common. Godkin had begun contributing to the *Post* back in the fifties. Though he had differed with its somewhat advanced views on democracy and its early Reconstruction policy,<sup>68</sup> he had known it as an ally in the campaigns for Civil Service Reform, for "hard" money, for lower tariffs, and for reform within the Republican party. In the election campaign of 1872, the *Post*, like the *Nation*, "held its nose" and supported Grant against Greeley, although it had originally supported the Liberal Republican movement which culminated in Greeley's candidacy.<sup>69</sup> Under William Cullen Bryant's long (1829-1878) editorship, the *Evening Post* like the *Nation* had achieved an enviable reputation for editorial independence and for literary quality. Some of Godkin's select weekly audience in New York could, accordingly, be expected to join him on weekdays as well.

As an associate editor, the independent Godkin found himself in an unfamiliar role, but for a time things appeared to run fairly smoothly. The three editors were, in general, agreed on policy. The *Post* and the *Nation* were to be the champions of a low tariff, a hard currency, Civil Service Reform, "independency" in politics, and international peace; they were to fight imperialism and loose spending and corruption in government. Schurz, the editor-in-chief, and Godkin, besides being in general accord in their political views, were both intellectuals. (This was something of a rarity among journalists in 1881.)

But in other respects the two men differed. Schurz brought to the *Evening Post* organization something which Godkin lacked, a popular following. Godkin was insulated; Schurz was a student at first hand of men and affairs and no amateur as a politician.<sup>70</sup> He easily detected his associate's superficiality as a writer. Particularly he objected to Godkin's habit of substituting ridicule and personal denunciation for serious argument. This practice was, after all, a way of begging the question and, to a man as literal-minded as Schurz, clearly a vice. Of course the erstwhile German immigrant must have known his own limitations as an editorial writer when measured by his high-strung colleague's standards. Godkin might with a degree of truth have said of Schurz's writing, as Charles Francis Adams did of his brother Henry's, that it reflected "the German professional belief that vivacity is trickery, and that there is some positive merit in dullness."<sup>71</sup> Although the above would be an unfair assessment, it was true that Schurz as a controversialist was inclined to be tedious and dry—the humorless exponent of the direct statement.

Much of Godkin's writing, by contrast, glittered—enough so that his subordinates imitated him and were flattered whenever their work was mistaken for his. When he was at his best in controversies, his caustic pen dripped with wit and stinging invective. Ridicule, irony, and sarcasm were his forte. A technique he frequently employed to destroy an opponent was ludicrously to overstate the opponent's position. Then he would

by feigning broad agreement with the caricature he had drawn hold up his victim to ridicule.

This technique of irony served on numerous occasions to demolish an opponent's case where an orderly exposition of the facts might have failed. But it had its dangers. Sometimes Godkin's irony was misconstrued, as happened in 1884 when he was supporting Chinese "immigration." The editor, who viewed China with her coolie millions as a profitable supplier of cheap labor,<sup>72</sup> had sought to ridicule those in the United States who feared an oriental inundation of the country. A Japanese paper, the *Jiji Shimbun*, picked up the *Nation's* facetious proposal that Congress pass laws to "authorize the summary slaughter of all Chinamen found within the country after a certain date." The shocked Japanese editor prayerfully hoped that the United States government would not endorse such a proposal.<sup>73</sup>

This is not to imply that Godkin was incapable of reasoned argument. But even when he summoned all his best arguments and, like Schurz, "gave the lie direct," the clever thrusts of acid wit and ridicule were seldom missing; they were depended on to win over the gallery and distract and demoralize the enemy. The unique effectiveness of Godkin's editorials, in short, was attributable more to their trenchant style than to any special logic or insight they revealed. A superficial reader and thinker, Godkin's strength as a publicist and critic lay in his ability to use words persuasively — to clothe the ideas he embraced in seductively attractive garb and to make all others appear odious and ridiculous by comparison. But it was his savage humor that furnished the major relief to a style of writing that, as he aged, came increasingly to be regarded as mere ill-tempered fault-finding.<sup>74</sup> Schurz, in addition to his other faults, Godkin thought, was sentimental.<sup>75</sup>

The two men, then, did not agree on the standard of editorial writing to be cultivated for the *Evening Post* and the *Nation*. Within a year it had become fairly obvious that, as a contemporary humorist put it, there were "too many mules in the same pasture."<sup>76</sup> All that was needed to bring about a schism was an editorial crisis.

It came in the summer of 1883 when a strike of railway telegraphers threatened to tie up transportation and cripple communications throughout the country. Schurz adopted a more or less impartial editorial attitude. But, when he left to go on vacation August 1, Godkin by pre-arrangement stepped into his shoes as editor-in-chief. The new editor immediately changed the policy of the papers. He editorially denounced the strikers, arguing that their action was opposed to the public interest. On August 8, this erstwhile disciple of John Stuart Mill offered a blueprint for the regimentation of the men "whom some of our modern corporations employ in telegraphic or railroad service . . ." They have to be "governed," cried the *Post*, "on the same principles as an army."<sup>77</sup> This was more than the liberal Schurz, who had been fuming for several days over Godkin's handling of the situation, could stand. He heatedly wrote Godkin:

The relations between those who sell their labor by the day and their employers, whether the latter be great corporations or single individuals, are simple contract relations, and it seems to me monstrous to hold that the act of one or more laboring men ending that contract by stopping their work is, or should be, considered and treated in any case as desertion from the army is considered and treated.<sup>78</sup>

It was one thing, Godkin apparently felt, for the "Idle Rich" to loaf and quite another for striking trade unionists to halt their production. In 1870 he had written that there was no nobler word in the literature of politics than "liberty." A generation later he defended the Idle Rich in their right to be idle if it pleased them. "Better," declared he, "that ten men should loaf than that one should lose his liberty." It is on this basis that Professor Edward C. Kirkland has recently concluded that Godkin "never wavered on freedom." This, it will at once be seen, compares with Villard's earlier assertion that Godkin "never compromised on any issue of human liberty." Both, it would seem, are in error. For example, Godkin, in justifying his opposition to Negro suffrage, wrote that man's highest al-



legiance was owed to civilization and liberty, *in that order*. An editor should be "above all things loyal to civilization," he similarly declared on another occasion. Vernon L. Parrington was correct when he said of Godkin that "culture dispossessed liberty in his affections."<sup>79</sup>

Schurz made it clear in his letter that he would accept no responsibility for current editorial policy, and he predicted that the course Godkin was following would result in the *Post's* coming to be regarded as a corporation organ. His resignation was officially announced that autumn.<sup>80</sup>

With Schurz deposed and White largely concerned with financial topics and with the over-all editorial supervision of the two papers, Godkin was left free to dictate their editorial policies. He set to work immediately to remake the *Evening Post* in the image of the *Nation*. He succeeded so well that thenceforth the *Post* could almost be termed a daily edition of the *Nation*,<sup>81</sup> which was always Godkin's real love. Its history between 1883 and 1900 cannot, of course, be separated from that of its daily counterpart. Its editorials appeared first in the *Evening Post*. But many of them bore evidence of having been "planted" there by the editor.

At the same time, the importance of Horace White, one of the best known newspapermen of the day, to the *Evening Post* organization must not be underestimated. Godkin was a poor journalist. He had almost no head for the administrative details necessary to the running of a daily newspaper. Almost every summer after 1889 he spent abroad. Some of his reporters—and there were only about a half dozen—he did not even know by sight. Indeed the impression appears to have been fairly widespread that White was the real spokesman for the *Evening Post* and the *Nation*.<sup>82</sup>

## VI

In 1884 Godkin horrified some of his readers by coming out in support of the Presidential aspirations of Grover Cleveland. To a generation of Northern Americans schooled in the post-Civil War technique of "waving the bloody shirt" as a means of keeping the Republican party in power, this was little short

of treason. But Godkin saw a clear-cut moral issue. Blaine, it appeared, had used an official position for private gain. "The Blaine movement," Godkin assured Lord Bryce, "is really a conspiracy of jobbers to seize on the Treasury under the lead of a most unprincipled adventurer."<sup>83</sup> Other reform-minded Republicans—Mugwumps, they were quickly dubbed by the opposition—joined the revolt. A few hundred New York votes, as it turned out, determined the election. Cleveland won by a narrow margin.<sup>84</sup>

Godkin emerged from the contest battle-scarred—he had, among other things, contracted a very serious libel suit—but with a feeling of enhanced prestige. He viewed the Mugwump triumph as a vindication of his program of putting the "public welfare ahead of party loyalty."<sup>85</sup> Other editors now hastened to declare the political "independence" of their papers. As for Cleveland's administration, Godkin approved it in general. Although disappointed over the lack of concrete results, he was heartened by the President's announced support of tariff reduction, Civil Service Reform, and curbing of expenditures in government.<sup>86</sup> In 1888 Cleveland was defeated in his bid for re-election by Benjamin Harrison. The *Nation* and the *Evening Post*, in supporting Cleveland, added to the bitterness with which the campaign was waged by intimating that Harrison was "not a safe man to be President." Later, when all had calmed down, the two papers were content to refer to the new President as the "caretaker of the White House."<sup>87</sup>

Godkin's qualified admiration for Grover Cleveland continued during the Harrison administration. He repeatedly spoke approvingly of the ex-President's conservatism. He was especially gratified by the stand the New Yorker took in his party against Free Silver and against territorial expansion. In 1892 he accordingly supported the Democratic national ticket headed by Cleveland. That year the *Post* failed to print its customary campaign exposé of Tammany politicians up for re-election. Critics of Godkin were in high glee. "Now the *Post* has always held," observed a contemporary, "that one should act in municipal matters without any thought of party, and

never mix considerations of expediency with a plain civic duty." He continued:

Yet at the time of this election it had not a word to say regarding the Tammany candidates; nor did it print its customary "Voters' Directory," in which it always describes the Tammany men as "thugs," "murderers," "felons," and other equally unpleasant things. Some wicked Republican . . . offered to pay for the insertion of its "Directory" at the regular advertising rates. The offer was refused . . . and general hilarity reigned among the unregenerate at finding Mr. Godkin playing the "practical politician" and turning his back upon his own civic ideals.<sup>88</sup>

Godkin supported Cleveland throughout most of his second term. The mutual esteem each professed for the other was ended only in 1895 when the editor opposed the Administration's course in the Venezuelan boundary affair.<sup>89</sup>

The Presidential election of 1896 presented somewhat of a dilemma to Godkin. The Republicans had nominated William McKinley of Ohio. McKinley, with whom the editor's conservative sympathies would normally have lain, was an "arch-protectionist." Besides, announced Godkin, his "mental equipment [was] of the very slenderest."<sup>90</sup> McKinley's one distinct virtue, in the eyes of Godkin, was his opposition to the free coinage of silver.

At the Democratic convention, on the other hand, radicals in the party had wrested control from the "Gold Bugs." Bryan, their nominee, was a Populist in everything but name. He possessed the additional disqualification, in Godkin's estimate, of having helped to spawn the silver "lunacy."<sup>91</sup> Commenting on July 16 on Bryan's Cross of Gold speech, the *Nation* declared: "His speech to the convention was an appeal to one of the worst instincts of the human heart—that of getting possession of other people's property without the owners' consent. That, explained the paper, "is what is meant by free coinage at 16 to 1." The "American people"—the "business community" the *Nation* had it in an adjoining sentence—were not taking seriously



"the proceedings of the roaring mob at Chicago." The paper continued:

The nomination of Bryan for President of the United States and the adoption of a platform of repudiation make a pitiful climax for the Democratic party—the party of Jackson, Benton, Seymour, Tilden, Cleveland . . . . The decadence of the party in the past few years, since the Tillmans, Altgelds, Bryans, and Blackburns came to the front and took the leadership, has been melancholy in the extreme. There are signs in plenty that nearly all the men who give character to the party today . . . will repudiate this ticket and this platform as they would the pest.<sup>92</sup>

In the campaign which followed, Godkin studiously avoided praising the Republican standard bearer, but he supported McKinley, nevertheless, by urging "sound money" Democrats—"by which," explained the *Nation*, "we mean those of intelligence and substance"<sup>93</sup>—to desert Bryan. The editor himself voted for John Palmer, the candidate of the Gold Democrats, but, like many Cleveland Democrats, he hoped for a Republican victory.

## VII

When Schurz departed from the *Evening Post* organization, owner Villard gave Godkin a completely free hand. In so doing, the financier prepared to underwrite any financial losses the policies of his captious editor might entail the organization in the future.<sup>94</sup> His fears should have been groundless—that is, if the words of Godkin were to be taken at face value. According to Godkin the papers under his direction were to be the soul of sedateness. "My notion is, you know," he wrote Garrison in 1883, "that the *Evening Post* ought to make a specialty of being the paper to which sober-minded people would look . . . instead of hollering and belling and shouting platitudes like the *Herald* and *Times*."<sup>95</sup>

But this was partly wishful thinking on the part of Godkin. Ostensibly his role was that of an "impartial, fair-minded ob-

server, whose sole mission [was] to deal out justice with an even hand, being elevated far above the sordid considerations of party and policy."<sup>96</sup> He is commonly supposed to have been the first editor to separate the editorial page from the business side of his paper. In reality, Godkin was rabidly partisan, and it was notorious that economic considerations aided in shaping his judgments. It was this latter tendency which prompted McCready Sykes to write the well-known verses which began:

Godkin the righteous, known of old,  
Priest of the nation's moral health,  
Within whose *Post* we daily read  
The Gospel of the Rights of Wealth.<sup>97</sup>

Henry Adams thought the editor ruined his influence by his "insistence on points of morals." Since Godkin's moral values were economically determined, Adams indicated, they were scarcely universal in their application.<sup>98</sup> Godkin's constant scolding, and the somewhat hypocritical tone of moral superiority which accompanied it, alienated many thoughtful persons. "Sober minded" people, it seems, no more than any others enjoy being continually talked down to about their virtue. The world, Godkin feared, was about to go to pot,<sup>99</sup> and his actions reflected his belief. The intemperateness, not to say irresponsibility, which characterized his assaults cost him many readers. Had Godkin lived back in the seventeenth century in England, he might well have been labeled a common scold and confined to the town stocks. As it was, his persistence in singling out certain public men for repeated attack not only evoked sympathy for them but, in some cases, probably helped encourage a reaction in their favor.

Private enemies tended under Godkin's pen to become confused with public enemies. Some of his most withering blasts were reserved for the economic and political heresies of men whose desire for honest government was no less great than his own. Personal pique unquestionably had something to do with his attacks on Wendell Phillips. His obsession over James G. Blaine amounted to a psychosis. Moreover, it was alleged, and with

good reason, that he painted the political scene and the men in it so black that he frightened educated young men away from politics.<sup>100</sup> He may have hurt some other causes more than he helped them. A zeal which normally translated itself into contempt for the other side and a reflection on its every motive unquestionably lost him supporters.

Joseph H. Choate is said to have characterized the Godkin *Post* as that "pessimistic, malignant, and malevolent sheet, which no good citizen ever goes to bed without reading."<sup>101</sup> Choate, as Godkin's lawyer, was scarcely in a position to be objective.<sup>102</sup> Nevertheless the irritating pretensions of the editor to infallibility in matters of political and economic faith and morals could hardly have failed to affect adversely even his most faithful followers, who were as capable as any of enjoying his discomfiture when weaknesses in his own moral armor were detected. This was a high-powered audience, the readership of the *Nation* and the *Evening Post*. Godkin, as the High Priest of Criticism in the Gilded Age, had trained a generation of critics, and, although they continued to follow him on fundamentals, the hardier souls among them minimized the association and constantly sought ways to assert their intellectual independence.

As an editor, Godkin seldom made retractions or acknowledged corrections. Had he been able manfully to admit to having made mistakes, he would have been better liked.<sup>103</sup> His enemies, needless to say, were jubilant when he was caught red-handed in sin. Once he rather lamely sought to justify his having proffered a five-dollar bribe to a New York policeman who had come to his home at the behest of Tammany Hall and at an inconvenient hour to arrest him on a charge of slander.<sup>104</sup> On another occasion, the editor's campaign for an international copyright law backfired when he singled out the merchandising firm of John Wanamaker for attack, charging it with vending a "pirated" edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.<sup>105</sup> Thereupon it was alleged that not only were the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* accepting advertising for similar "pirated" editions, but the *Post* was lifting stories from English magazines and reprinting them in its Saturday supplement.<sup>106</sup>

The nineteenth century was the heyday of personal journalism. Godkin's respect for his profession was low, and he sought in his private life to hold himself aloof from other editors. Nevertheless some fierce editorial encounters with competitors took place. A New York rival of the *Nation* in the early days was Theodore Tilton's weekly *Independent*. Although their dislike for one another seldom erupted onto the editorial page, neither was backward in acknowledging its existence. Among the dailies, Bennett's *Herald*, the *World* and Greeley's (later Whitelaw Reid's) *Tribune* were the recipients of Godwin's severest criticism. In 1870 he confessed privately to "a burning longing to help to train up a generation of young men to hate Greeley and Tilton and their ways." Greeley, he informed Carl Schurz in 1872, was "a conceited, ignorant, half cracked, obstinate old creature."<sup>107</sup>

Most of the big New York dailies, the above included, ignored Godkin's summons to personal combat. One which did not was the *Sun*. Its editor, testy old Charles A. Dana, in an effort to win circulation, resorted to headlines and gave considerable space to crime and scandal. He sometimes supported Tammany Hall. It was Dana, according to Lord Bryce, who pinned the name "Mugwump" on Godkin in the campaign of 1884.<sup>108</sup> Their editorial combats generally produced more heat than light. "What can you expect of a city in which every morning the *Sun* makes vice attractive, and every night the *Post* makes virtue odious?" was supposed to have been Mrs. Frederick P. Bellamy's explanation for the depravity of New York.<sup>109</sup> In Dana, as the following will indicate, Godkin caught a Tartar. Before the Brooklyn Bridge was opened in 1884, engineers tested its strength by running huge trucks loaded with heavy weights over it. Dana, working on the theory that Godkin's paper was as heavy as it was dull, proposed that the trial be limited to one wagon bearing a copy of the *Evening Post*.<sup>110</sup>

One thing on which Godkin and Dana saw eye to eye, however, was in their conspicuous lack of sympathy for the toiling masses. This was well illustrated during the difficult winter of 1893. The financial panic that year had caused widespread unemployment and consequent suffering in the United States.

A pressing question was what to do about the unemployed. Godkin was willing that they be aided through organized charity so long as they were, in his words, "resigned and patient," but not if they showed themselves "grasping or discontented or anarchical."<sup>111</sup>

The following year agrarian and proletarian discontent in the United States had virtually reached the boiling point. Godkin addressed a meeting of civic leaders in New York City. Like most conservatives, the "fighting editor" was frightened but not sufficiently so to propose that concessions be made to the enemy. Instead he offered his usual panacea—Civil Service Reform. It was in reality a defense. "I think the events of each day," he declared, "show us more and more clearly that if we are to preserve our form of government, and our social organization intact . . . it is to be done . . . by giving the government the kind of service which the experience of mankind has shown to be best."<sup>112</sup>



## Government and Diplomacy

Godkin, as self-appointed moral mentor to his generation, did not limit his editorial gaze to the American domestic scene. With the exception, perhaps, of one country, England, he was even less a respecter of nations than of persons. In this connection the foreign relations of the United States came in for their share of critical scrutiny. The purpose of this study will be to ascertain the specific character and—where the evidence is available—accuracy of that scrutiny. But first, in order to establish an adequate frame of reference, it is advisable to inquire in some detail into Godkin's philosophy of government as it related to the conduct of diplomacy.

In 1890 Godkin looked back over the twenty-five years of the *Nation* and of the country's development since Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox. He wrote with unaccustomed optimism of the tremendous advances of the colleges, pointing with particular satisfaction to a post-war academic development: the schools and departments of political science which now dotted the campuses of the land. He could see in them distinct possibilities for improving the moral tone of the country.<sup>1</sup> Although he was an economic determinist, Godkin had always held that the body politic could be separated from its social and economic milieu and its representatives taught to perform single-mindedly in the public interest. But by 1890 he had come to regret greatly the disappearance from public life of men he could compare to the Founding Fathers, "public spirited" men, men to whom pay was not important—or needed.<sup>2</sup>

One such man, Godkin thought, was the elder Charles Francis Adams. Writing on the occasion of the New Englander's death in 1886, Godkin pointed to him as a "statesman of the old school," a man who set great value on "being right in one's own eyes no matter in whose eyes one may be wrong."<sup>3</sup> It was Adams' rugged independence, declared Godkin, that made him a power as American minister in London during the Civil War. The news from home in those trying days, it seems, was conflicting, and Seward's dispatches were often "full of vapor." A man who "stood less firmly on his own feet" would inevitably have allowed his country's cause to suffer. But Mr. Adams was made of

stuff that was abundantly stern for the crisis. He was never afraid, never disheartened, never chilled; he never minded what society said or the newspapers said. He met the English with a temper as dogged, and tenacious . . . as their own, and they had . . . at last to confess its power and see him return home in triumph.<sup>4</sup>

Adams was unpopular because of his coldness. Godkin, who detested sentiment, defended him for it. Because the austere New Englander, commented he, shrank instinctively from displays of sentiment, the public found his reaction to their attempts to honor him chilling. Because Adams was never careful to conceal his disgust at any pretence of "humbug or gush," it followed that it had to be "pure and unmitigated fitness" which brought his appointment to the Geneva Tribunal.<sup>5</sup>

Godkin's somewhat gushing appraisal of Adams, like the dispatches of Seward, unwittingly contained its share of "vapor." The diary of Adams, as James Ford Rhodes pointed out a few years later, shows that "underneath his calm exterior were serious trouble and keen anxiety and, in fact, the strain which he underwent during the Civil War made itself felt in later years."<sup>6</sup>

Godkin subscribed to the Devil theory of history. The character of a man was to him either black or white; there were seldom shades of gray. Once when criticized for resorting so to personalities, he assertedly retorted, "My dear sir, rascals



in all ages have objected to personalities!"<sup>7</sup> As someone rightly said, it was not sin he attacked but sinners. "The impeachment of [Maynard and] Barnard and the chasing of Cardozo from the bench," declared Godkin in 1892, "has done more for judicial purity than all the articles, sermons and speeches of the last fifty years. In short, no work of reform can be done . . . without personality."<sup>8</sup> To a suggestion that Tammany Hall was traceable to a "system," he replied: "This city is badly governed owing to the bad conduct of certain men, and owing to nothing else under heaven."<sup>9</sup> If public men were honest, it followed, harmony would prevail throughout the social organism.<sup>10</sup> It was that uncomplicated—to the moralistic Godkin. As he wrote in 1868 in reflecting favorably on Anson Burlingame and what he somewhat inaccurately called the "opening of China":

The opening of China to the outside world . . . is in some respects equivalent to the discovery of a new continent . . . . But whatever glory we have won by it, whatever profit we may gain from it, we owe to individual character, to the moral force that lies in the walk and conversation of a single public servant . . . . We have triumphed mainly because we were represented by an able and honest man.<sup>11</sup>

Burlingame, Godkin asserted, had accomplished more for his country by "loyalty, integrity and judgment" than all the battleships, dispatches, or statistics with which it might have assaulted the Chinese government. All this was done, moreover, without giving the "slightest umbrage" to the representative of any other power.<sup>12</sup>

A few months later a rival English editor sought to make Godkin eat these words. The London *Saturday Review* described Burlingame as a sort of advance agent for New York capitalists bent on capturing Far Eastern commercial privileges.<sup>13</sup> Outwardly unruffled, Godkin tartly dismissed this charge as being in the "worst style" of that journal.<sup>14</sup> Yet it was obvious that the Tory *Saturday Review*, for its own reasons, was peering into the wings, while the gaze of the New York editor was limited to the actor in the center of the stage.

An error into which Godkin invariably fell in dealing with personalities—it is especially apparent in his comments on diplomats and diplomatic practice—was that of confusing competence in dress and manners with character and statesmanlike vision. One suspects that he would only with difficulty have been persuaded that there could be dents in the moral armor of the Brahmin dilettante of two worlds—a Lowell, for example, or a Charles Eliot Norton. To Godkin the United States embassy at London without such a man at its head was almost unthinkable. Much of the force of his attacks on Horace Greeley, for example, is vitiated by the knowledge that the great New York journalist's rough democratic mannerisms and eccentricities of dress bothered the fastidious editor of the *Nation* as much as his high tariff policy.

Similarly, Godkin's well-known pessimism was a barometer of the state of his essentially anti-democratic feelings. His pessimism mounted after 1865 in direct proportion to the spread of popular government and the decline of the genteel tradition. There was, for example, a direct relationship between the editor's inherited class consciousness and his lifelong pursuit of that nineteenth century chimera Civil Service Reform. Godkin, to his credit, could see much more clearly than those about him the rapidity with which the genteel tradition was passing.<sup>15</sup> But what he saw beginning to replace it filled him with unreasoning horror. Avid readers of the *Nation* in the 1860's had real reason to feel that civilization was trembling in the balance while that highbrow journal thrashed out the Servant Problem. Once its editor reached the definite conclusion that the availability of good valets was a *sine qua non* to the survival of civilization, it was perfectly logical for him to turn to pessimism.<sup>16</sup>

As a utilitarian, Godkin was officially bound to hold that democracy was a desirable form of government only if it could, in practice, prove its usefulness to society. As a moralist he was, of course, under no such restriction. The two approaches were not in his eyes contradictory. That form of government is best, Godkin thought, which offers the most favorable climate to the improvement of individual virtue. His role was to de-

fine virtue. Democracy failed on both the above scores to meet his test. Inasmuch as this occurred well before the end of his career, it is a mistake to regard him as do some writers as a champion of democracy.<sup>17</sup>

For much of the confusion over this point Rollo Ogden is to blame. According to that uncritical biographer, democracy was in Godkin "bred in the bone."<sup>18</sup> Many of the writings of Godkin, it is true, indicate a superficial regard for the democratic ideology, as he rather narrowly defined it. He presumably had enough democratic irreverence for what Walter Bagehot called the "dignified parts" of the British constitution once to refer to the Queen and the Prince of Wales as "fat, useless royalty." But there are also some rather eloquent defenses of the monarchist principle to be found in his writings.<sup>19</sup> And lurking underneath all his writing was one recurrent theme: popular government was good in theory—unalterably bad in practice.<sup>20</sup> His major objection to woman suffrage appears to have been that it would permit servant girls to outvote their mistresses.

In common with the Philosophic Radicals, Godkin had early detected in the democratic ideology a rationale for bourgeois control. When the masses sought to force its application in their interest, he made no attempt to conceal his disappointment. In later life he was, as Ogden indicated, "deep in Burke."<sup>21</sup> In his only original book, *Unforeseen Tendencies of Democracy*, published in 1898, Godkin outlined the evils he believed had accompanied the extension of the suffrage and the consequent loss of interest in "good government."

Godkin's inclinations were wholly aristocratic. In the drawing room he was witty, ingratiating, and sought after. In the office, on the other hand, he was aloof and was disliked by his employees.<sup>22</sup> His Brahmin tastes had crystallized early. "I don't like New Yorkers, and I do like Bostonians," he gave as a reason in 1870 for wanting to become a professor at Harvard.<sup>23</sup> By 1889 he could report from the England he had fled as a young man, "The people here are so polite, and there are so many well dressed, educated men, and life is so well ordered, I am thinking I am not worth a cent as a 'good American.' *This is confidential.*"<sup>24</sup>

Democracy, it has been well said, is a luxury. Those who would enjoy its prized freedoms must be prepared to pay in a certain efficiency of process and in some other of the so-called refinements of life. In his Prussian zeal to eliminate sentiment from government and substitute for it counsels of perfection, Godkin was at odds with what roughly passed in 1865 for the liberal-democratic faith.<sup>25</sup> Although he would have hotly rejected the label, he was perilously close to the authoritarian tradition, as the following will illustrate. In July, 1876, the *Nation* commented on the Centennial celebrations of the previous week. It suspected the orators of having talked too much about democracy and not enough about "good government." The *Nation* said in part:

The hope and aim, secret or open, of all who have passionately and fruitfully labored and endured for public ends has always been not so much that any one form of government should succeed as that good government should endure; and if this generation is to prove worthy . . . it will not be satisfied with "government of the people, for the people, by the people," unless that government is a really progressive and improving government.<sup>26</sup>

Government, the *Nation* continued, was a bundle of mutual services. The extent of "its contributions to the moral growth of the world" depended on the "efficiency" with which these services were rendered. "It will seem a small thing, three hundred years hence, to have founded a government without kings or aristocracy." The world then would not be interested in what form of government was followed; it would simply ask, "what valuable additions did we make to the art of living in society."<sup>27</sup> Culture, in other words, before liberty.

True, Godkin's philosophy of government compared favorably with that of John Stuart Mill and, as he never tired of telling his readers, with the intent of the Founding Fathers. The state should be severely limited in its power and functions, virtually a passive policeman. In common with Mill and the English classical economists, Godkin theoretically held fast to

the belief that personal liberty would best be promoted by the government's not tampering with the social and economic order.<sup>28</sup> He made a genuine effort to be consistent. Since tariffs, other than for revenue, were a form of interference with the natural laws of political economy, he strongly opposed them as "socialistic." Such things as labor standards, old age assistance, and the relief of the "widows and fatherless," were, in his opinion, "no more the business of the Government than of railroads or banks."<sup>29</sup> The *Nation* began early to fight against the eight-hour day. By 1893 it was denouncing graduated taxation as "socialistic," "inquisitorial," and a "form of violence comparable to brigandage."

Godkin, in brief, subscribed to the concept, "that government is best which governs least," but as adapted by him to the realities of the day the phrase seemed to gain something in translation. Practically, it began increasingly to sound like "that government is best which governs *in the interest of the least*." His laissez faire principles were sufficiently flexible, for example, that he could assert the desirability of state interference to assist corporations in winning their labor disputes.

The incipient authoritarianism in Godkin's polity was most apparent in his discussions of municipal government.<sup>30</sup> He believed that the task of organizing urban society for political ends should be entrusted to an elite. He did not, of course, use the word elite—he spoke as a champion of Civil Service Reform. In his view only men of "substance," those of the propertied, "intelligent" class, were fit to govern. If this reform were made, good government, it followed, would automatically filter downward from the hands of those at the top of the social and economic pyramid. John Jay's classic remark, "Those who own the country ought to govern it,"<sup>31</sup> epitomized the views of Godkin on the subject.

For public opinion, Godkin had almost as much contempt as he had for demagoguery in politics. This accounted for some rather amusing shifts in editorial position from time to time. Shortly after the founding of the *Nation*, he made the expansive prediction to Charles Eliot Norton that within ten



years "I shall be the most odious man in America."<sup>32</sup> He literally exulted in being on the wrong side of the popular feeling.

In short, some of Godkin's famed independence must be ascribed to mere "oppositeness." As Lord Bryce approvingly noted, he was never happier than when he was swimming against the current.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, the fighting editor in 1895 was genuinely saddened by the spectacle of the conservative Grover Cleveland, whom he had supported through three Presidential campaigns, winning the plaudits of "the crowd" by jingoistic tactics in the Venezuela boundary controversy. Similarly, the great ground swell of public opinion that helped force the United States into war with Spain in 1898 was to him the final depressing proof of the dangers of popular government.

## II

Contrary to a legend which apparently will not down, Godkin held European traditions and practices in high regard. A prominent American historian, doubtless inadvertently, infused new life into the legend recently, when he wrote that Godkin "had always assumed that America would be different, and when he applied the word 'European' to American policy and tendencies, he used it as an epithet."<sup>34</sup> The potentially misleading character of the remark is easily apparent from an examination of Godkin's editorials on diplomacy and foreign relations. As he wrote a friend in 1866: "There is something very charming about Lowell—something of the European flavor which, you will forgive me for saying, makes an American, when he has it, the best style of man in the world."<sup>35</sup>

Godkin's criticisms of the American diplomatic establishment invariably turned on its lack of conformity to established Old World forms. Much of his ammunition came from British sources; for example his authority for a sweeping criticism of the American Diplomatic and Consular Service in 1868 was a hostile report rendered to the Foreign Office by two British diplomats.<sup>36</sup> Because diplomacy had not been made a profession in the United States as it was in Europe, he scolded in 1867, "all kinds" of men were permitted to represent the country abroad.<sup>37</sup> For this reason an American minister, "instead of

finding a high social position ready-made for him, as the diplomatists of other nations do, is apt to have to make it himself."<sup>38</sup>

One major stumbling block to good diplomatic practice by the United States, Godkin pointed out, was that Americans had a different notion of the function of an ambassador from Europeans. "The main object of European governments in keeping an ambassador at foreign courts is to get information of the temper, feelings, and opinions of the classes who control the affairs of each country . . ." Since the European ambassador's chief function was to supply facts rather than "to make bargains or express opinions," he was selected chiefly for his social gifts. A man was not fitted to do this sort of work effectively, it seems, unless he had "good manners, a good deal of social experience, a fair share of conversational talent, considerable knowledge of the world in which he is moving, skill in entertaining in his own house and money enough to do it with, and, above all else, a good knowledge of French . . ."<sup>39</sup>

By French, Godkin explained that he did not mean the "horrible jargon in which the mass of Americans and Englishmen order their beefsteaks in Parisian restaurants," but rather that command of the language which would enable one to converse easily on literary, metaphysical, and political topics. The difficulty, of course, in getting representation of this type was that Americans would be very much amused if asked to give high office to a man simply because he spoke French well and possessed the knack of making himself agreeable in the drawing room. "Consequently," said Godkin, "the chances are that when one of our ministers goes abroad, he finds himself unprovided with any of the tools which his brother diplomatists are using."<sup>40</sup>

It was the firm opinion of Godkin that heroic measures were necessary if the United States was to be purged of its political corruption and returned to the faith of its Fathers. Accordingly in 1868 he struck a blow for the purity of the American diplomatic corps as against the inroads of political patronage and western democracy. One of his charges was that the "Old Warhorse school," as he called it, of politicians, abetted by western constituents, was spreading false ideas as to the proper function of diplomacy. One of them, it seems, was that



ambassadors existed solely to transmit messages from one government to another. In the view of the Old Warhorse, as Godkin interpreted it, diplomacy was something which was expressive of the national will. It should accordingly be direct and open, "carrying its motives on its face," and needing nothing in its transmission through ambassadors but "clear statement and prompt delivery."<sup>41</sup>

Nothing, Godkin noted, could be further from the truth. He pointed out that inevitably under such a theory of ambassadorial function diplomatic appointments would be given to the party faithful without reference to special fitness. Thus, in the Old Warhorse view, character and mind were disregarded, and the part played by the diplomat in society was treated as "purely ornamental."<sup>42</sup>

Godkin sometimes held that a major reason for official corruption in the United States was that salaries were too low.<sup>43</sup> Diplomats were often no exception. Most of the work of an American minister, he pointed out in 1869, was done "at dinner tables and evening parties, and in clubs and in private chit chat." The country should therefore pay a minister enough to entertain on a wide scale "without encroaching on his private fortune."<sup>44</sup> Similarly, the shoddy condition of American legations abroad came in for its share of criticism from the editor.<sup>45</sup>

One reason public officials were underpaid, declared Godkin in 1868, was that the sentiment in the United States "which decides what a man's wants ought to be" was largely that of farmers.<sup>46</sup> He amplified his contention as follows:

In every other civilized nation the city population rules the country population, and regulates everything connected with the public service. It decides what the wants of a public functionary ought to be, what his dignity or their tastes or their feelings require, and how far they should be consulted in fixing the amount of his salary. Here the agricultural classes may, for the first time in history, be said to control completely the government, not in general only, but in details.<sup>47</sup>

The same year in which Godkin wrote the above, Congress passed legislation which would have effected substantial savings in the expenses of American diplomats. The measure, which was sponsored by Charles Sumner and Nathaniel P. Banks, forbade the wearing of court dress by American diplomats. As a champion at once of economy in government and of higher pay for diplomats, Godkin conceivably should have supported the measure. But he did not.<sup>48</sup> In March of the following year, 1869, the American minister absented himself from a royal levee in London. This was due to "unavoidable circumstances," reported the *London Times*. Translated, said Godkin, that meant that the British had a rule that "everybody shall on these occasions appear either in military uniform or in court dress."<sup>49</sup>

The situation assumed importance only in the extent to which it riveted attention on the *Alabama* controversy then simmering between the United States and Great Britain.<sup>50</sup> Though obviously nettled by the embarrassment before London society of Minister Adams, Godkin pretended neutrality toward "the great dress question," as he termed it. "The aim should be," he somewhat piously announced in the *Nation*, "to provide such men for the service that it shall make no difference what they wear . . ."<sup>51</sup> But he concluded his editorial on a frankly partisan note by identifying the cause of court dress with that of Civil Service Reform. An investigation, he predicted, would show that hardly any of those who opposed the wearing of court dress took "much interest in the reform of the Civil Service, or in having the country represented abroad by its best men."<sup>52</sup>

As would be expected, the interest of Godkin in American representation abroad centered around the embassy at London. The British mission, according to him, had largely escaped the blighting effects of political patronage and western American democracy. It had been a tradition almost from the first, he remarked in 1885, that the American Minister in London should be representative of "the best the United States can produce in the way of social and intellectual culture."<sup>53</sup> He was, ideally, one "who can command the respect of the best English company by his mental equipment, his manners, his self respect,

and his long familiarity with the way people of refinement live."<sup>54</sup>

Godkin's warm estimate of the manner in which the London mission was conducted by Charles Francis Adams has been noted.<sup>55</sup> Adams' successor in 1868 was Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, "a gentleman of whom everybody must speak with respect, both for his character, his career, his age, and his learning." But Godkin shared the common opinion that as minister the Marylander had permitted his good nature to outrun his discretion.<sup>56</sup>

John Lothrop Motley succeeded Johnson in 1869 as minister to England. Godkin endorsed the appointment in the *Nation*, but he had been lukewarm toward the selection of Motley from the beginning. The New England historian was a protégé of Senator Charles Sumner; neither was in the full time good graces of the *Nation*. Besides, Godkin's friend Norton was a disappointed applicant for a diplomatic appointment. The editor told Norton that, while the selection of Motley was "a good one from the social point of view," the historian lacked "the necessary mental furniture for the discussion of the questions now pending between England and America." Motley, besides, was, like Sumner, "a little too ardent."<sup>57</sup>

The upshot of President Grant's feud with Senator Sumner over Santo Domingo<sup>58</sup> was that within a year Motley was summarily recalled. His successor was General Robert Schenck. That worthy proceeded to distinguish himself by introducing draw poker to London society and by getting involved in the promotion of an ill-conceived American mining venture in England. When in 1875 Reverdy Johnson publicly sought to defend the record of Schenck, Godkin strenuously objected. If the attempt to rehabilitate the general in the eyes of the public should succeed, he protested in the *Nation*, it would "greatly add to the existing demoralization of the civil service." Privately the editor wrote Congressman Abram S. Hewitt congratulating him for his prosecution of the inquiry into the Schenck affair.<sup>59</sup>

No American, in the eyes of Godkin, ever so completely measured up to the requirements of the ideal ambassador as

James Russell Lowell. The poet's career as minister to England, Godkin declared editorially in 1885, "has formed an episode in American diplomacy which, it is safe to say, has had no parallel in effectiveness, except Franklin's mission to Paris and Mr. Charles Francis Adams's in England during and after the war."<sup>60</sup> Lowell admittedly had dealt with no weighty diplomatic problems. His great contribution, it seems, was as an ambassador of American culture. Godkin made the most of the opportunity afforded by Lowell's retirement to return some of the compliments the poet had been paying him for twenty years. He wrote:

In that higher political philosophy [democracy?] which all Englishmen are now questioning so anxiously, [Lowell] has spoken not only as a master, but almost as an oracle. In the lighter but still more difficult arts, too, which make social gatherings delightful and exciting to intellectual men, in the talk which stimulates strong brains and loosens eloquent tongues, he has really reduced the best-trained and most loquacious London diners-out to abashed silence.<sup>61</sup>

Then came the Godkin accolade to silence any possible dissent. Lowell, in "captivating English society—harder, perhaps to captivate, considering the vast variety of talent it contains, than any other society in the world—in making every Englishman who met him wish he were an Englishman too, [has] performed a feat such as no diplomatist, we believe, has ever performed before."<sup>62</sup>

Godkin's social prejudices, it should be noted, were no bar to his abandoning his Brahmin associates on occasion for the role of practical politician. Eight years before the above was written, he had been consulted about the formation of President Hayes' cabinet. When the name of Lowell came up, he vetoed it, he told Norton, on the grounds that the poet was "not fit physically and otherwise for executive drudgery." Besides, "even an offer to him would give the enterprise a slightly fancy or literary air, that would be injurious."<sup>63</sup>

Lowell's successor at London was conservative, social-climbing Edward J. Phelps. This "shoppy little Yankee attorney,"

as editor Henry Watterson somewhat uncharitably characterized him,<sup>64</sup> served through the first Cleveland administration. In 1888 President Harrison was faced with the task of finding a replacement for him—a task Godkin considered to be an unenviable one. The editor repeated in the *Nation* his statement of three years previous, to the effect that the United States had thus far had fair luck in getting men of the “better element” to represent it at the court of St. James. Johnson, Motley, Edwards Pierpont, John Welsh, Lowell, and Phelps all had had “other claims to social favor than their money.” Even General Schenck, Godkin pointed out, might be included.<sup>65</sup>

But now “the vulgar rich man,” who would like to show Londoners that “he too has liveried lackeys and smart turnouts and heavy silver plate,” was loudly demanding diplomatic appointment. Such a man would pay plenty into the party coffers to give his wife and daughter the opportunity to cut a figure in London society. The preference of Godkin as between this type and the “cultured gentleman” was unmistakable. But in his pessimism he declared that Harrison would have to choose between the two types knowing that neither could satisfy a clamorous “Democracy” at home without disgracing himself. Either variety, he explained,

will enjoy English society, and let it be seen plainly that he does so; and the result will be that he will offend both “the plain American,” who thinks a real American ought to call on the Queen in his shirt-sleeves and walk London streets with his boots outside his trousers, and the patriotic Irishman, who thinks the American Minister ought to leave a threat of war at the British Foreign Office every morning . . . .<sup>66</sup>

### III

A perennial source of irritation to Godkin was the American tourist in Europe.<sup>67</sup> The multiplication of “uncultured” tourists abroad had, it seems, (1) created grave personal embarrassment for “socially qualified” American travelers and residents in Europe; (2) inflicted serious burdens on their dip-



lomatic representatives; (3) given foreigners a bad impression of the United States. With reference to the second point, Godkin complained in 1867 that, whereas European governments required of their diplomats only that they "be civil to such of [their] countrymen as are of a certain rank," it was mandatory on American diplomats "to pay every possible civility to every American man, woman, or child who can by hook or crook muster enough money to pay his or her expenses to the door of the legation."<sup>68</sup>

Godkin produced statistics to illustrate the dimensions of the problem. Three-eighths of the Americans who invaded Europe every spring, he asserted, belonged to a class "which in no other country in the world possesses the means of making the 'grand tour' . . . ." Some of them, he lamented, had even been taken into the presence of royalty. He recalled in this connection one particularly notable scandal. The American minister to France, it seems, had presented a fellow countryman at court, not knowing apparently that he was a barber by profession. Needless to say, observed Godkin, the exposure when it came was painful to all concerned. Precautions were taken at the French Court to prevent such an occurrence in the future.<sup>69</sup>

Sometimes complaints of Godkin like these "caught on," though not in the form in which he had intended them. This occurred in 1894 when an Anglophobic lady patriot of Philadelphia rose to demand that American citizens stop running off incessantly to Europe—especially England. Godkin, his Anglo-Saxon pride aroused, countered with a lengthy rebuttal in which he stressed the advantages of European travel and strongly urged Americans in all walks of life to avail themselves if possible of that "broadening" experience.<sup>70</sup>

Similarly, in 1895, Godkin called for American tourists to help reform the country's consular service. As he wrote:

That any people rich enough and civilized enough to have consuls . . . should have *such* consuls as ours, puzzles foreigners extremely . . . . It is to be observed, however, that when Americans arrive on the ground, visit [an American consul] . . . and find where he stands socially in foreign capitals, the absurdity of our

consular system does come home to them. An increasing number of Americans have this experience every year.<sup>71</sup>

"When our system is seen on the spot under hostile eyes," continued Godkin, "and before sneering critics of our character and manners, its weaknesses become more glaring and the desire to get rid of it stronger." That, he concluded, was "one of the great uses of European travel." It gave "many thousands every summer a new point of view."

Late in life Godkin once spoke rather wistfully of himself as an "American of the *vielle roche*" (old school).<sup>72</sup> His constant fretting about the figure his adopted countrymen and their diplomatic and consular representatives cut in European society stemmed, however, from a theory of government the origins of which were clearly more European than American, more authoritarian than democratic. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that his interest in American diplomatic and consular practice was wholly limited to such absurdities. He was capable, on occasion, of quite constructive criticism, as, for example, when in 1868 he discussed the pending Diplomatic and Consular Service bill.<sup>73</sup>

Godkin approved of the increases in pay—"which at present is badly deficient"—proposed by the bill, but he objected to the formula by which they had been determined. The bill, he pointed out, gave "less to Vienna, one of the most expensive capitals in Europe, than to Brussels, one of the least expensive." To St. Petersburg, "the most expensive capital in the world," it gave no more than to Berlin, "the least expensive of all the great capitals." Likewise he opposed the provision for setting up pay grades (first grade, second grade, and the like) on the ground that they might be confused in Europe with rank.<sup>74</sup>

The bill also called for the consolidation of several missions. Godkin did not favor this. Aside from the obvious disadvantage of having a minister residing in only one of the capitals to which he was accredited, what would happen, he asked, where a minister found himself accredited to two powers hostile to one another? If the consolidation was insisted upon,



the bill, in his opinion, ought to be reworded so as to list the nations bracketed together as equals. As the bill then stood it read "To Spain [to be accredited also to Portugal] . . . To Belgium [to be accredited also to Holland]," and so forth. To be thus in our statutes "disposed of in brackets," Godkin pointed out, would be humiliating to the nations concerned.<sup>75</sup>

Nor did Godkin think that the consolidation scheme would result in any economies. He predicted that, although it nominally called for the consolidation of two missions under one envoy, in practice it would work out differently. At one mission, it seems, would be an underpaid chargé performing the work of the former minister resident. At the other would be a minister performing the same duties but with increased rank and pay and a larger staff. Godkin conceded that, under certain conditions, consolidation might work. But in any event the decision should, he thought, be left to the Department of State or the Foreign Service Board. In England, he pointed out, such work was a function of the Foreign Office.<sup>76</sup>

#### IV

As the post-Civil War decade in America passed, and the country became preoccupied with its own internal expansion, interest in foreign relations lagged. The country entered on what Professor Thomas A. Bailey has appropriately termed the "nadir of diplomacy."<sup>77</sup> Even the *Nation* was momentarily affected by the growing belief that formal diplomacy was a thing of the past. By January, 1880, Godkin, or one of his subordinates, was able to venture in "The Week" the following suggestion:

Considering the changes the telegraph has wrought in the mode of conducting negotiations with foreign powers, and the impossibility of making diplomacy a regular calling, it is a question whether the work of all existing missions would not be best done by a single Minister, having his headquarters in Paris, free to travel about, and with consuls-general under him in the various capitals.<sup>78</sup>

Godkin never tired of pointing out that the diplomatic and consular machinery of the country as presently constituted needed overhauling. Had America's foreign relations been as "complicated and as important" as those of European powers, he observed in 1878, its diplomatic corps would probably "have been remodelled or swept away long ago."<sup>79</sup> Because the American diplomat lacked fixed rules of promotion, pay, and tenure, he was looked upon by his European colleagues as an amateur. "He is, therefore, very likely to be recalled before anybody begins to mind very much what he says or care when he goes."<sup>80</sup> The situation, it would seem, was steadily worsening. The editor pessimistically noted in 1885 that American embassies abroad were fast becoming rewards for political service.<sup>81</sup> As a result American ministers, it seems, were no longer fit to negotiate or "even to observe and report." Hence important negotiations now had to be conducted step by step from home or by special agents.<sup>82</sup>

Fortunately for the country, remarked Godkin in 1878, whenever serious diplomatic questions had arisen it had had the good sense to put them in the hands of competent amateurs.<sup>83</sup> The erroneousness of the Old Warhorse theory of diplomacy was never better illustrated, he insisted, than during the Civil War. Had an "average politician" been sent to London in 1861, declared Godkin, the United States would have gone to war with the British. Instead, the country at that time sent out a "better batch of diplomats . . . than perhaps any administration . . . since the early days of the Republic." Moreover, hardly one of them owed his appointment to his "political claims." "They were all, or nearly all, representative of what is best in American society, of that element in it which gives it its strongest claim to the gratitude and respect of the civilized world . . . . We doubt if any country was ever so well served as this country was by them."<sup>84</sup>

While Godkin was fairly consistent with his faultfinding at short range with the American diplomatic and consular service, he was less so in his proposals for reform. Officially, he was for a professional service from top to bottom. Unofficially, he tended to regard ambassadors chiefly as "social representatives" of the country to be recruited from the eastern intel-

ligentsia. Literary men, he believed, had been especially successful in this respect. In 1882 he editorially scolded those western legislators that "want a 'new deal,' and think it is time for the West to have the London mission, too long reserved to the Eastern 'littery [*sic*] fellers.'" <sup>85</sup> Some years earlier, in arguing for a professional service as against appointment by special (political) preferment, he had charged that the Old Warhorse school regarded the role of resident minister as "purely ornamental."<sup>86</sup> But in 1878 he pointed with pride in the *Nation* to such obvious diplomatic amateurs and "ornaments" as George P. Marsh, Bayard Taylor, James Russell Lowell, and George Bancroft.<sup>87</sup>

The editor would have been quick to explain, however, that the Old Warhorse politician endorsed *any* class of man—political expediency being the sole criterion—while the *Nation* endorsed only one. To this end Godkin suggested in 1878 that the country might pass a law to exclude from the higher diplomatic posts "all persons who have made no reputation outside the United States." He defended his unique proposal as follows:

The use to the people of the United States of paying an unknown American lawyer or merchant—ignorant of the world . . . of literature, science, and art, dumb and ill at ease in all the social circles in which he finds himself, and thoroughly conversant with nothing but "the mechanism of government" in his own country—for lounging in a foreign capital, is something which nobody has explained. . . . <sup>88</sup>

An important disqualification of such people in the eyes of Godkin was that they were usually "upstarts." Like his arch-conservative contemporary Senator Nelson W. Aldrich of Rhode Island, Godkin viewed the field of American politics and diplomacy as rightfully the private game preserve of what he deemed to be the "right thinking" element of the population. This quality he had early come to associate almost exclusively with a well-to-do minority, those who, as he said, shared the "conventional distinctions" of either social rank or great personal talent and charm.<sup>89</sup>

Thus Godkin's strictures against the country's shirt-sleeve diplomatic corps, like his attacks on American municipal government, were only an elaboration of his criticisms of democracy. His labors, it should be remembered, were performed in a period of transition in American life. The dislocations created by Reconstruction, mass immigration, the settlement of the West, and the Industrial Revolution contributed to a political situation in the country after 1865 which tried even the faith of staunch democrats. The situation proved to Godkin, who apparently needed little convincing, that democracy had come into conflict with problems it could not solve.

Of those men whom Godkin singled out for personal attack—even the venal political bosses, one suspects—most were closer than he to the people. The Greeleys, Phillipses, Butlers, Elys, Altgelds, Bryans, and Theodore Roosevelts were all, in one way or another, inextricably linked with the popular surge for more democracy.<sup>90</sup> As for Tammany chieftains like Richard Croker and "Robber Barons" like Jim Fisk, their obscure origins and parvenu tastes bothered Godkin somewhat more than the manner in which they had gained their wealth.<sup>91</sup> It was Fisk who rode so pretentiously about New York City with "his strumpets," who had come there as a "smart, impudent and ignorant pedlar."<sup>92</sup>

To Godkin, "good government" was the unceasing vigilance on the part of public officials toward any influences tending significantly to alter the social and economic status quo. He assigned to diplomacy a major role in this task. "As private rights and interests become more important and more sacred," he wrote in 1868, "the different political communities of the world become more closely knit together in destiny and interest."<sup>93</sup> The time had passed, he believed, "when any people, with a progressive and elastic civilization and political development, can afford to neglect the employment of the best means to secure intelligent, influential, and efficient diplomatic representation."

"Enlightened and honest diplomacy," Godkin concluded, "has become a permanent power in shaping and directing the affairs of the world."

## The French Intervention in Mexico

The first major question in American foreign relations to come under the editorial scrutiny of Godkin in the *Nation* was the French intervention in Mexico. Begun in 1861 ostensibly as part of a joint European effort to compel Mexico to discharge her obligations to her foreign creditors, the intervention had been secretly planned from the beginning by the Emperor Napoleon III as a military adventure. Historians are not in unanimous agreement as to the motives of the French dictator, but it seems clear that he meant with French bayonets to establish under Maximilian a Latin, Catholic empire which would serve both as a barrier to further expansion by the United States and as a source of raw materials to France.

Although the United States government conspicuously abstained from recognizing the Maximilian regime, the American people (if Northern press reaction may be taken as a reliable indication) had been surprisingly apathetic toward the French intervention in the beginning.<sup>1</sup> Nor had the official attitude of the Administration toward it during 1862 and 1863 reflected more than mild disapproval. With the Union cause at low ebb, there was of necessity little protest from Washington. Indeed, Secretary of State Seward was so cautious that even the conciliatory American consul-general in Paris urged him to be more outspoken. Seward, who feared that a strong course would provoke Napoleon into recognizing the Confederacy, re-



plied that it was not the time for offering "idle menaces" to the French Emperor. "Why," he asked, "should we gasconade about Mexico when we are in a struggle for our own life?"<sup>2</sup>

The conciliatory policy of the Lincoln Administration was further underscored in October, 1863, by Seward's warning to the American envoy to Austria not to debate the Monroe Doctrine with the Austrian government. "The United States," he wrote, "have neither a right nor any disposition to intervene by force in the internal affairs of Mexico, whether to establish or maintain a republican Government there, or to overthrow an imperial or foreign one, if Mexico shall choose to establish it."<sup>3</sup>

But as the military position of the North improved, public sentiment began to veer toward the adoption of a more vigorous foreign policy. By the end of 1863 Radical Republicans had become outspokenly critical of Seward's equivocation toward the French government. To further disturb party tranquillity, rumor had it in the spring of 1864 that the Administration was ready to extend recognition to Maximilian's regime in return for assurances that Napoleon would not recognize the Confederacy.<sup>4</sup>

Seward's policy had thus become a political issue. Delegates to the two Republican Conventions, held in May and June of 1864, vied in putting their respective factions strongly on record against the continuance of the French occupation of Mexico.<sup>5</sup> For the time being, the strategy of the Administration was highly unpopular, but Seward and Lincoln continued to bide their time. In November, Thomas Balch, a Philadelphia attorney just returned from residence in Paris, had an interview with Lincoln, in the course of which the President reportedly ridiculed the Mexican Empire, calling it "a pasteboard concern on which we won't waste a man or a dollar. It will soon tumble to pieces and, may be, bring the other down with it."<sup>6</sup>

Despite such official optimism, the French "concern" in Mexico was still very much in evidence when the American Civil War ended in April, 1865. But the new Johnson Administration lost no time in demonstrating its willingness to



act. An army under General Sheridan was massed on the Rio Grande border. Public opinion favorable to a United States intervention was cultivated through the press and at mass meetings at which speakers called for action in the name of the recently revived Monroe Doctrine.<sup>7</sup> It now seemed perfectly plain that if the French troops did not get out of Mexico, Uncle Sam would put them out by force.

## II

Godkin, beginning with the first issue of the *Nation*, followed developments in the crisis with interest. But, aside from one long editorial and perhaps two others (his authorship of them is in doubt), his comment was entirely limited to "The Week."<sup>8</sup> His role, it may be said at the outset, was not a wholly constructive one. Much of his comment, which was uniformly critical, was wholly speculative or based on rumors that were sometimes contradictory. Consistent only in the impartiality with which he censured all parties to the dispute, Godkin's policy may best be described as a vacillating one. Some of this may be ascribed to the unfavorable conditions surrounding the *Nation* in its first year. Constant feuding with his stockholders could scarcely be expected to make for editorial consistency. As a matter of fact, Godkin officially surrendered some of his authority to Frederick Law Olmsted for a few weeks in 1866.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time that he was highly critical both of the Mexican Liberals and of Administration policy toward the French, Godkin made clear his dislike for Napoleon III and his Austrian protégé, Maximilian. He shared the common belief that the French emperor had tried to persuade England to join in an intervention in the American Civil War to compel the permanent separation of the North and South.<sup>10</sup> Napoleon, the *Nation* asserted in its first issue (July 6, 1865), had sought Texas and Louisiana in exchange for recognition of the Confederacy.<sup>11</sup> It predicted that history would show that the United States had all along been in greater danger from France than from England. But it scouted the notion that an intervention by the two powers would have cost the North the war.<sup>12</sup>

Godkin and his associates held likewise to the popular view that the French intervention was a thinly disguised attempt to curb the power of the United States and to enhance that of the "Latin race." As the *Nation* editorially pointed out on February 15, 1866, the collection of the Jecker debt was only a pretext for the invasion of Mexico. "France has not spent millions and sacrificed thousands of her soldiers," it declared, "in order that a naturalized Swiss banker should get satisfaction from his Mexican creditors."<sup>13</sup> As for Napoleon's troubles in Mexico, they arose, asserted the *Nation*, from his having misjudged the strength of the North. He would never have begun the Mexican adventure "had he not been assured in his own mind of our national disintegration."<sup>14</sup>

Godkin made it clear that he wanted the French out of Mexico. But he was not clear in his own mind as to how their departure was to be expedited. Hence he permitted the *Nation* to vacillate between semi-intervention and isolation. The accent was on the latter. On July 18, 1865, for example, "The Week" noted the progress of the recruitment by Maximilian of ex-Confederate soldiers.<sup>15</sup> Yet two weeks later it was certain that the collapse of the intervention was not "very far off," and it was beginning to share the concern of France over the presence of Sheridan's troops on the Mexican border.<sup>16</sup>

Several schemes were hatched in semi-official circles in the United States for the expulsion of the French without an actual declaration of war. Godkin was uniformly critical of them. The one which seems to have enlisted the most support was that initiated by the indefatigable Mexican minister in Washington, Matias Romero. Romero and his supporters wanted to organize and equip an army of Civil War veterans in the United States to go to Mexico to fight on the Liberal side. According to the plan, soldiers who wished to volunteer were to be mustered out of the United States Army for that purpose. General Grant fell readily in with the project and, according to Romero, showed some interest in leading the army himself.<sup>17</sup> But the man ultimately selected for the task was General John M. Schofield. President Johnson and Secretary of War Stanton appear to have looked with some favor on the scheme, but Seward, who had been

bypassed by Romero, was obviously displeased. He took steps temporarily to discourage the project by offering the vainglorious Schofield a "special mission" to France.<sup>18</sup>

Grant, it should be said, had been working for intervention for some time. Shortly before the end of the Civil War he had countenanced a plan to unite with Confederates of the Trans-Mississippi Department in a joint attack on the French in Mexico. The plan miscarried for lack of Confederate support. Later he directed General Sheridan to make war materials available to the Liberals and to muster out of his command soldiers who desired to cross into Mexico for service with the Federal army.<sup>19</sup> Enough arms to equip several divisions appear to have been transported into Mexico.<sup>20</sup> In the Cabinet, Secretary Seward successfully opposed Grant's views, but the *Nation* mistakenly assumed that the hero of Appomattox spoke for the Administration when he publicly advocated an expedition into Mexico.<sup>21</sup>

Romero's project was to have been financed by the sale of Mexican bonds to North American friends of the Liberal cause. The detachment of Schofield from the scheme seems to have abated none of the enthusiasm of the sponsors of the loan. Early in November, 1865, while Juarez was still retreating toward the north, offices were being opened in the chief American cities for the marketing of a thirty-million-peso Mexican bond issue. The bonds were to bear seven per cent interest in gold, and they offered as security lands and customs duties which were at the moment under the control of Maximilian.<sup>22</sup>

Harry T. Peck once accused Godkin of taking a "cold-blooded, commercial view of almost every public question."<sup>23</sup> The partial validity of the charge was illustrated by the course the editor took in the Mexican crisis. Solicitous lest his readers might allow their attachment to the Liberal cause to interfere with their instinct for business, Godkin lost no time in admonishing them editorially against purchasing the Mexican bonds. A leader editorial in "The Week" on November 2—which anticipated by several days their actual marketing—advised that the bonds were a poor investment, at least, as it sarcastically observed, until such time as the United States government sig-

nified its intention of setting the Mexicans up in business.<sup>24</sup> The qualification added was obviously a reference to lobbying activities of the sponsors of the loan who were attempting to get the United States government to guarantee the bonds. Congress, incidentally, might have acquiesced had it not been for the opposition of Secretary Seward who held that such a guarantee would be a breach of neutrality.<sup>25</sup>

The popularity which the Liberal cause enjoyed in the North is illustrated by the fact that, without the guarantee, the American brokers (Corlies and Company) were able to dispose of about ten per cent of the bonds. Contrary to the predictions of the *Nation*, they appreciated in value and became a good investment. But, as usual, the Mexican government suffered in the transaction. The brokers retained more than a third, approximately one million dollars, of the sum collected as their commission.<sup>26</sup>

Not long after the comments on the bond issue were published in the *Nation*, a full page editorial on the Mexican situation appeared in that journal. Anonymous as usual but replete with Godkin phraseology, it complained that American reasons for wanting Maximilian and the French ousted from Mexico were mainly "sentimental."<sup>27</sup> Declared the editorial:

Positive loss or damage from the French invasion of Mexico we can hardly be said to have suffered. The Monroe Doctrine, it is true, has been set at naught by it, but the Monroe Doctrine is, after all, only a doctrine, and as yet the consequences of its violation touch our dignity rather than our security or our pockets.<sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless, Godkin and his associates were frankly puzzled as to how to advise the Administration to proceed. Waiting for Napoleon to make up his mind, they conceded, was "expensive." Not only had a large standing army to be maintained, but the affair, it seems, was having a "paralyzing" effect on business. Besides, many admittedly "shrewd" men had concluded that the cost of waiting was greater than "the cost of going to war at once would be." In short, Godkin had found himself in a dilemma of the purse strings.

Despite his obvious disinclination to support the Monroe Doctrine where pecuniary interests would not be visibly served thereby, Godkin saw to it that the Doctrine received regular endorsement in the columns of the *Nation*. One example will illustrate. In January, 1866, Governor Anderson of Ohio publicly blasted the Administration and called for the return of Ohio troops from the Mexican border. In so doing Anderson praised the French and attacked the Monroe Doctrine, declaring that it sought to "establish and usurp the office of a universal wet-nurse to all the orphan republics in the world." Whereupon Godkin rose to the defense of Monroe's dogma. A leader in "The Week" on January 11 conceded the partial validity of the governor's argument against attacking Maximilian, but it maintained that he had misread the character of the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>29</sup> As "The Week" observed:

It is tolerably well understood that Mr. Monroe's intention was not republican propagandism, but resistance to despotic interference of the Old World with the New. It was a defensive policy, of which the motives were, nationally speaking, selfish and not philanthropic. Its strength consists not in any absurd notion of honor about standing by the declaration of a former President, but in the wisdom and logic of its conception.<sup>30</sup>

But while he steadily endorsed the principle contained in the Doctrine, Godkin was consistently alarmed by proposals that it be implemented in Mexico.<sup>31</sup> His equivocal attitude toward the whole controversy was well summed up on July 26, 1866, when the *Nation* observed noncommittally: "We are all believers in the Monroe Doctrine, so far at any rate as concerns Maximilian, but indeed the very name of Mexican affairs has become enough to make people impatient."<sup>32</sup>

### III

Meanwhile, the tone of Secretary Seward's official communications with the French government was becoming increasingly firm. Late in the summer of 1865 the French foreign office had sounded out United States Minister John Bigelow on



American recognition of Maximilian as a *sine qua non* to the removal of the French troops from Mexico. Seward gave the proposal no encouragement.<sup>33</sup> Then on November 6, 1865, his memorable dispatch "No. 300" to Bigelow reached Paris. In it he expressed "regret" that the French government had thus far failed to indicate that it was planning to "remove . . . the cause of our deep concern for the harmony of the two nations." He again made it clear that he considered recognition of Maximilian to be out of the question.<sup>34</sup> Concurrently with this dispatch Seward announced the appointment of General John Logan as minister to the ambulatory Republican capital of Benito Juarez and directed General Schofield to proceed to France.<sup>35</sup> Logan was known as an outspoken foe of the French intervention and a stalwart champion of the Monroe Doctrine.

Sheridan's army, meanwhile, was being held on the Rio Grande as a constant reminder to the French and to the American public that the Administration meant business. The President's first annual message to Congress, December 4, 1865, though couched in friendly terms, nevertheless reflected some of the mounting impatience felt in official and Congressional circles.<sup>36</sup> In the face of these and other domestic pressures, Secretary Seward on December 16 dispatched another strong note to Paris.<sup>37</sup>

What of the reaction of Godkin to these developments? With each passing week the editor's criticisms had tended to become more edged. Although it was still impossible to tell what specific policy, if any, he wanted the Administration to adopt, he let it be known in general that he believed the crisis called for dexterity rather than strength. Thus "The Week" on November 23 opposed the Logan appointment on the grounds that the sending of a general to Mexico would be regarded in Europe as "an additional proof of the Administration's intention to pick a bone with Maximilian and, if need be, with Napoleon himself."<sup>38</sup>

Yet there was at the same time no evidence that Godkin subscribed to the theory of the *Nation's* French correspondent, August Laugel, who insisted that his countrymen, if left completely alone, would be forced out of Mexico by a "fatal historical law."<sup>39</sup> In March, 1866, the *Nation* departed from its usual



attitude of pessimistic objection and sounded a wholly unaccustomed martial note. Discussing the possibility of hostilities with France, an unidentified editorial writer minimized the strength of the French fleet and boasted that three of the new type American ironclads would make short work of the "rolling and pitching French monsters, with their toy-gun batteries and flimsy side armor." "How long," was the rhetorical question of the *Nation*, "would it [then] take to seize the few available harbors on the Mexican Coast, and hold them against the French iron-clads?"<sup>40</sup>

That the *Nation* in its about-face should have exaggerated the strength of the United States Navy was not surprising. Secretary of the Navy Welles, it was true, had testified seven and a half months before at a cabinet meeting that the United States was hardly in a position to undertake a conflict with a first class power.<sup>41</sup> But this was not known to the general public. When one of the Navy's new double-turreted monitors, the *Miantonomoh*, carried Gustavus Vasa Fox on a special mission to Russia in 1866, it inspired awe wherever it went.<sup>42</sup>

Whatever semblance of consistency Godkin and his associates might otherwise have maintained in their attitude toward the Mexican question was lost in their eagerness to ridicule the pronouncements made on it by public men whom they disliked. Three weeks after the chauvinistic editorial just described, a leader writer in the *Nation* fixed his sights on a favorite Godkin target, Congressman Nathaniel P. Banks, chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, who, it was alleged, wanted the United States to appear at the Paris exposition of 1867 "with a pistol in each hand and a saber between our teeth."<sup>43</sup> The *Nation's* sermon ran as follows: Banks' object seemed to be to instill fear of the United States abroad. But brag never frightened anyone. Besides, it was in extremely bad taste to go to a "festival of peace" just to get an audience to listen to American war whoops.<sup>44</sup>

Three months later, Godkin again reversed his position in order to get at another hated adversary, the western lawmaker. It was now editorially alleged in the *Nation* that squirt guns, in effect, were being wielded in a situation which called for

loaded pistols. The scene was the United States Senate; the action, a debate on the motion to appropriate funds for the participation of the country at the Paris Exposition. Senator Grimes of Iowa offered an amendment to the motion which would make the financing by Congress of United States attendance at the Exposition contingent on French withdrawal from Mexico.<sup>45</sup> The proposal was doubtless politically inspired; the *Nation* looked upon it as customary western buffoonery. In a style that again was characteristically that of Godkin, "The Week" (June 12, 1866) complained that "there are some men in Congress who never can see in international difficulties anything more imposing than a squabble at a corner grocery of a western village."<sup>46</sup> If the United States was in earnest in wanting the French out of Mexico, Godkin's readers were now informed, it should employ its army to *drive* them out. The "plan of bringing foreign enemies to reason by not sending goods to their exhibitions" was comparable to "a man's following an enemy in private life with a syringe and squirting a little water on him now and then," irritating, that is, but nothing more.<sup>47</sup>

The controversy simmered throughout the spring and summer of 1866. But there could be little doubt after April, 1866, of Napoleon's desire to get out of Mexico. That month, French Minister to Washington de Montholon gave official notice to the United States government that the intervention was about to be liquidated. The French troops, it was announced, were to be withdrawn in three installments beginning in November, 1866. Although there were yet to be some stormy scenes enacted before the final act in the intervention drama was ended, the move could rightfully be hailed as a victory for Seward's patient diplomacy.

In May, 1866, that perennial Mexican adventurer General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna arrived uninvited in New York. The vain old conspirator had been duped by swindling agents into believing that Secretary Seward had plans for him in Mexico and that Congress had appropriated the money for him to carry them out.<sup>48</sup> It was true that earlier in the year the Secretary of State had personally explored the possibility of

using Santa Anna. The previous January, in the course of a trip to the West Indies, Seward had stopped at the headquarters of the exiled general on St. Thomas and discussed the Mexican situation with him. But if it was not clear to Seward before he undertook the journey that the Liberals would boycott any project which included the former President, it became abundantly so after he returned. From then on, agents whom Santa Anna dispatched to Washington met with frigid receptions.<sup>49</sup>

The eastern press, on the whole, received Santa Anna in a hospitable manner. But Godkin and the *Nation's* new associate editor Frederick Law Olmsted were as usual intent upon not being misled. Uninformed of the true facts, they permitted the *Nation* editorially to declare that the Mexican general's arrival, together with the "alleged good understanding between him and Secretary Seward," ought to be protested by Congress, since it was clear that the majority of the American people liked neither Maximilian nor Santa Anna and the Almonte party.<sup>50</sup> The comment was chiefly notable for the fact that heretofore the *Nation* had intimated that Seward's sympathies inclined too strongly in the opposite (Liberal) direction.

#### IV

The French intervention, while its effect must not be overestimated, had gone far toward instilling in the Mexican people a much needed sense of unity. Factional strife all but disappeared as patriots united in common hostility to the foreign invader. But as Maximilian's cardboard empire tottered toward its fall, the old parties began to reappear. Commenting on this development in November, 1866, the *Nation* voiced the suspicion that the Johnson Administration intended to intervene in Mexico.<sup>51</sup> The basis for Godkin's fears was his assumption that President Juarez would be overthrown unless the United States furnished him military support. In contemplating such a contingency, the editor, for once, left no room for doubt as to his position. "If we aid [Juarez]," declared the *Nation* on November 15, "we shall have a very nice little job on our

hands—neither more nor less than the reorganization of Mexican society and government.”<sup>52</sup> The journal recommended that President Johnson employ his energies at home.

Two weeks later Godkin returned to the attack, with the President as his chief target. The *Nation* now admitted that it was in the dark as to what policy the government meant to adopt toward Mexico after the French had left. But it was fairly obvious from his record to date that Godkin had no intention of endorsing any Mexican policy evolved by the Johnson Administration. In addition to his earlier expressed fears that the Administration planned to employ force against the French in Mexico, he had been conspicuously cool to diplomatic efforts by Seward to bring about a peaceable French withdrawal. Thus he added nothing on the score of consistency when he now permitted the *Nation* to argue that the duty of the United States had from the first been limited to “forcing” the French to withdraw from Mexico.<sup>53</sup>

Dire consequences, the *Nation* predicted, would result from a United States intervention in the internal politics of Mexico. In the first place, the country would be put to the expense of providing Juarez with an army to help him consolidate his power. Second, “great hordes of speculators and office-seekers” would descend on Mexico and, carpet-bagger fashion, exploit the country for profit. Third, it would “inevitably increase that accumulation of power and patronage in the hands of our own Executive which is at this moment the greatest danger of the country.”<sup>54</sup> Godkin, at the moment, considered Andrew Johnson thoroughly unsafe. An intervention in Mexico, declared the *Nation*, would only whet his taste for “meddling” and for “those stretches of authority which have already excited so much alarm, and which many deem sufficiently grave to be subjects of impeachment.” The chief reason for the editor’s hostility was the reconstruction policy of the President. As the *Nation* observed:

If our own reconstruction, in the work of which he [Johnson] is hedged round by a powerful and watchful majority, a hostile Congress, and a vigilant and pitiless

press, has had such an extraordinary effect in stimulating his love of arbitrary power, we may guess what an effect the absolute control of a great region like Mexico, far removed from the reach of American public opinion, would have upon him.<sup>55</sup>

Interestingly enough, at the same time that Godkin was voicing these suspicions of the Administration, Secretary of State Seward was himself warning Mexican Minister Romero against the private schemes of "Anglo-American speculators and adventurers."<sup>56</sup> But, despite the exaggerated expression he gave to them, Godkin's fears of the Administration were not wholly groundless. It was impossible of course to tell exactly how much of the current American interest in Mexican affairs stemmed from expansionist yearnings and how much from real sympathy for the Liberal cause; the evidence is that there was by this time a good deal of both.<sup>57</sup> But all that really mattered was that an atmosphere existed in the United States in 1866 which was favorable to an interference in Mexican politics.

This interest in Mexico reflected itself in a number of ways. Seward, ever since the failure of his expansionist designs on Mexico in 1861, had been soft-peddling schemes that would lead to the absorption of Mexican territory by the United States. But other would-be annexationists, both Democrats and Republicans, as well as genuine friends of the Liberal cause, were not so politic. In June, 1866, Godkin and Olmsted resorted to ridicule in an attempt to demolish Thaddeus Stevens' scheme for settling the Mexican question. Stevens, in their words, proposed to lend Mexico twenty million dollars "on a mortgage of Lower California, Sonora, Sinaloa, and Chihuahua."<sup>58</sup> "Why not make the loan a hundred millions at once?" was the sarcastic query of the *Nation*.

Three weeks later, with Olmsted departed and Godkin back in full editorial control of the *Nation*, it was editorially noted in "The Week" that Congress had adjourned, with the Senate tabling one of Congressman Banks' "little follies," the Mexican loan, and "some other similar pieces of absurdity."<sup>59</sup>



Seward's firm policy toward the French after 1865 had met with general approval. But it was widely felt that in addition some direct recognition of the Liberal cause was in order. By the end of April, 1866, the post of minister to the fugitive Juarez government had been vacant for two years, General Logan having refused to undertake the mission to which he had been appointed the preceding November.<sup>60</sup>

Seward now set about to remedy this deficiency. On May 4 he appointed Lewis D. Campbell minister plenipotentiary to the Juarez government. In his instructions of October 25, 1866, Seward directed the diplomat not to embarrass or obstruct the withdrawal of French troops. Expressly disavowing any territorial designs on Mexico, he authorized Campbell to tell Juarez that the good offices of the United States were available to pacify the country and to restore republican government. To achieve this end, the Secretary significantly added, "some disposition might be made of the land and naval forces of the United States."<sup>61</sup>

This action was soon followed by Seward's famous instruction to Bigelow of November 23, 1866. Dispatched over the Atlantic Cable at a cost of \$13,000, it protested vigorously against an announced change in the French plans for the evacuation of Mexico. It spoke of the impatience with which the evacuation was awaited so that the United States might "cooperate with the republican government of Mexico for promoting the pacification of that country and for the early and complete restoration of the proper authority of that government."<sup>62</sup> The Secretary added for emphasis that, "as a part of these measures," Minister Campbell, attended by General William T. Sherman, had gone to Mexico to confer with President Juarez. Seward unquestionably meant this somewhat bumptious cablegram mainly for Congressional consumption. He was apparently relieved when Bigelow presented a watered-down version of it to the French government and accepted an equivocal reply.<sup>63</sup>

While these developments were taking place, the *Nation*, as has been noted, was confessing to its readers its ignorance of the policy the Administration meant to pursue after the



departure of the French.<sup>64</sup> The garbled accounts by that journal of the Campbell mission testified to the truthfulness of its admission. On November 1, it gave prominence in "The Week" to an unsubstantiated rumor that France and Maximilian were planning to withdraw from Mexico immediately, leaving the United States to become the "protector" of the Juarez government. According to the *Nation's* rumor, the condition of the transaction was to be the cession of Lower California to the United States. In pursuance of these arrangements, reported the *Nation*, Lewis Campbell was about to set out to represent the United States at the "Court of Juarez."<sup>65</sup>

Two weeks later, on November 15, "The Week" changed part of its earlier report to read that Campbell and Sherman had been sent to Mexico "not it seems as plenipotentiaries but reporters."<sup>66</sup> Finally, on November 29, the same source had it that "General Sherman has gone to Mexico, accompanied by Mr. Clarke."<sup>67</sup> It asserted that the exact nature of "Sherman's mission," as it now inaccurately called it, was known only to a few. But it speculated that Seward had agreed to recognize Maximilian and had sent Sherman to Mexico for this purpose. To this the *Nation* was prepared to object. While not convinced that the Juarez regime merited official approval, it was unprepared at the moment to accept any alternatives. Maximilian, Godkin and his associates advised, ought not be recognized until he had proved that he could maintain himself in Mexico without external aid.<sup>68</sup> (Seward, of course, had no such plans for bolstering up the hapless Archduke's tottering empire.)

Throughout the succeeding weeks Godkin continued to hammer at Administration handling of the Mexican question. On December 6, 1866, "The Week" remarked that the President's annual message was an exceedingly dull one promulgated by a foolish and ignorant man "whose influence in legislation is at an end." But the writer detected a point for concern in that part of the message in which the President forthrightly expressed his disappointment that Napoleon III had not lived up to his agreement to begin the evacuation of French troops from Mexico in November.<sup>69</sup> Concern also was shown that Seward's cablegram of November 23, 1866, should have been

sent since, according to the writer, Seward knew very well that the troops were going to be removed.<sup>70</sup>

As has been previously indicated, Seward's cablegram, despite its political overtones, had been prompted by knowledge of a somewhat different character from that which was available to the editor of the *Nation*. In December the documents pertaining to the departure of the French troops were published, revealing, among other things, that Napoleon had made known to the Secretary of State his intention of keeping all of his troops in Mexico until spring, instead of bringing them home in installments beginning in November, as he had agreed to do. But Godkin and his colleagues, apparently subscribing to the theory that the best defense in case of editorial error was an enlarged attack, the next week charged the Secretary of State with partial responsibility for the new development. The French "breach of faith," the *Nation* indicated, might not have occurred had Seward abstained from active interference until the French had withdrawn.<sup>71</sup> As for the "Sherman" mission, it was "a kind of moral kick to the departing army to which the French government can not submit if it would." The net result of all the months of negotiation, complained the *Nation*, was that "Mr. Bigelow has [now] been assured that France will quit Mexico because it suits her to do so, and will choose the time of her going to fit her own convenience . . . ."<sup>72</sup>

Late in December, 1866, Campbell and Sherman, their attempts to reach Juarez having been frustrated by French control of the Mexican Gulf ports, returned to New Orleans to await developments. Neither spoke with the press, but a false rumor picked up by the *Nation* had it that General Sherman had interviewed Juarez and agreed to his plans, with the understanding that, if necessary, an American force would cross the Rio Grande to help him carry them out.<sup>73</sup> The essentially negative approach of Godkin to the whole controversy was epitomized by his editorial reaction to the rumor. "We reiterate our opinion," declared "The Week," "that the [Campbell] mission is either useless or mischievous, and that it will end in nothing or in something very undesirable."<sup>74</sup> The prophecy was in a sense confirmed. The incompetent Campbell idled

in New Orleans until June, 1867, when Secretary Seward finally requested his resignation.<sup>75</sup>

## V

In March, 1867, the last of the French troops left Mexico. But Maximilian stubbornly elected to remain behind. Godkin lost interest as the question which had occupied the international stage for nearly six years reverted to the arena of Mexican domestic politics. But his interest revived several months later when Maximilian was captured by Federal troops. The editor had up to this point shown no sympathy for the Austrian,<sup>76</sup> but now he temporized. The *Nation*, May 30, 1867, editorially conceded that the chances of the Archduke's avoiding a firing squad were slim. It pointed out that he had "exposed himself to the worst" by his decree authorizing the execution of captured Federal soldiers and by his remaining in Mexico after the French had withdrawn. At the same time it now felt that Maximilian was a "good man as princes go," and opposed the death penalty in the interest "of humanity and civilization."<sup>77</sup>

Nevertheless it was impossible at this point to tell what Godkin's real feelings toward the deposed emperor were. A week after the above was written, when the aristocratically inclined Atlantic Cable news agent cabled that "there was an intense and painful feeling of anxiety throughout Europe" over the Austrian's fate, the *Nation* objected on the score that "the news agent knows as well as we do that outside the small circle of Maximilian's relatives and personal friends . . . not a man, woman, or child in Europe has eaten less . . . or slept less on account of Maximilian . . . ."<sup>78</sup>

The foreign ministers of several states—Seward among them—interceded on behalf of Maximilian. But on June 19, 1867, the royal adventurer died before a Mexican firing squad at Queretaro. The immediate reaction of the *Nation* to the event was, as before, equivocal. It remarked that under the circumstances such an execution was not unusual. What Godkin and his associates now found to object to was the character of the executioners. Were they "anything but what they are," readers of

the *Nation* were told, "we do not know that we should much regret his fate . . . But, unhappily, the poor barbarians who have done this deed are not the men to give the civilized world a lesson in morality."<sup>79</sup>

Godkin was an articulate advocate of capital punishment.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore he conceded the responsibility of Maximilian for the executions of captured Federal soldiers, but such slayings, he had now come to rationalize, were routine to Mexican political life. The European nobleman who had ordered them was, he secretly thought, above being judged by the standard he had applied to his victims.<sup>81</sup> His equivocal comments both before and immediately after the Archduke's death had masked this feeling temporarily. But with each succeeding week his irritation mounted. Early in July he learned that certain western lawmakers were defending the execution of Maximilian on the floor of the United States Senate.<sup>82</sup> That association alone seems to have been enough to condemn Juarez and the Liberals in his eyes; at any rate, he undertook in a scathing editorial, July 18, 1867, to sweepingly re-examine the intervention period to their total discredit.<sup>83</sup> It marked the first time that Juarez had been openly attacked in the *Nation*.

Before discussing Godkin's editorial, it would be well to review his course to this point. He had committed the *Nation* at the start to the support, albeit lukewarm, of the Juarez government. Conceivably he had done this as a concession to his liberal stockholders, although it is more than probable that the policy was his own. Throughout the first half of 1866, the *Nation* continued officially to endorse Juarez and the Liberals, even though that endorsement was sometimes nullified by destructive criticism of projects designed to aid them. But it was obvious that Godkin could never be completely happy while swimming—even in his unorthodox fashion—with the tide. By July, 1866, he was beginning outwardly to tire of the popularity enjoyed by the Liberal cause in the United States.<sup>84</sup> Even so, the editorial blast of the next year came virtually without warning.

The relative suddenness of Godkin's change is suggested by the following. On November 29, 1866, the editorial posi-



tion of the *Nation* was that "nothing has occurred within the last four years to shake that confidence which we all felt before the war, that Juarez had the support of the Mexican people, and would eventually succeed in restoring order and prosperity throughout the republic." Yet on July 18, 1867, Godkin found to the contrary that the activities of Juarez and the Liberals during the above-mentioned period gave no indication "that they were possessed of either much influence with the people or of the capacity to use it, if they had possessed it."<sup>85</sup>

Similarly, on May 30, 1867, while frowning at the prospect of Maximilian's execution, it was nevertheless editorially pointed out that, should the archduke "meet his fate as a filibuster, it will at least have the good effect of teaching a lesson which will not soon be forgotten in European palaces." This confirmed the remarks of the preceding November 8. Utterances in an identical vein had followed on July 4.<sup>86</sup> But now on July 18 a temporarily unstrung Godkin penned the following:

There is . . . we honestly confess, nothing especially impressive or valuable in the lesson of [Maximilian's death]. It will, we fear, teach princes and invaders nothing, except that Mexico is a disgusting country peopled by ruffians, into which a Christian and a gentleman is a fool for venturing.<sup>87</sup>

Juarez, asserted Godkin, was a man of small stature, a leader of brigands, whom the French invasion had raised to a position of wholly undeserved respectability. Scornfully the editor pointed for confirmation of his charges to what he termed to be the feeble resistance the Liberals had offered initially to the French invasion and to the fact that the French had seen fit to put a price on the head of Juarez. The Liberals, it seems, were not patriots—they had only united to resist the French "lest their brigandage might be stopped." Such resistance as they had offered to the occupation consisted mainly of the "robbery and murder" of Frenchmen "which was dignified with the name of 'Guerrilla warfare.'"<sup>88</sup>

The indiscriminate fashion in which Godkin exploded charges about the head of Juarez almost suggested that his vi-

triotic pen had been converted to a shot gun for the occasion. The manner in which the Liberal cause had been sustained was so disreputable, declared he, that future defenders of liberty and national independence would draw no inspiration from it. He acknowledged on the one hand the worth of the liberal program of Juarez but characteristically nullified his approval by insisting that the Mexican president was too weak to implement it.<sup>89</sup> Then, as if to refute both his statements, he charged that Juarez during his enforced retirement had "learnt nothing and forgotten nothing" and was using strong arm tactics to subvert liberty in Mexico. The Mexican leader's "great instruments of order and progress," he sarcastically observed, were still "the rifle, the forced loan, and 'domiciliary visits.'" <sup>90</sup> Consistency thus had been abandoned in the effort to create as totally unfavorable an impression of the Mexican leader as possible. But the true focus of Godkin's complaint was in the following:

As might be expected, too, the only public men in the United States from whom [Juarez'] performances command admiration are politicians of what may be called "the hammer-and-tongs" school, who have little or no faith in ideas as a political force, and to whom gentleness, forbearance, or persuasion are signs of weakness; or of the other and worse class, who think there is something very noble, grand, and republican in shooting "a prince," when you catch him helpless and defenceless.<sup>91</sup>

Godkin, despite his irresponsible way of leveling charges, had put his finger on much that was true of Mexican politics. Yet his criticisms of Juarez seemed, for the most part, petty and unreasonable. The attack, coming as it did from the editor of a scholarly organ of semi-liberal opinion in the United States, was rather startling. Did it mean that the instinctively conservative Godkin now regretted having supported the republican cause against Maximilian and the French? Or was he merely showing his perverse streak? What was the moral of the Mexican imbroglio? In attempting to answer the last of these ques-



tions, Godkin may have shed some light on the first. The moral, he wrote, was "that forms of government or constitutions have in themselves very little value; that the best ever devised may, in the hands of a people too ignorant or too vicious to work it, prove the greatest of curses." The Mexicans, he maintained, made the mistake after Independence of setting up a "democratic republic" when they needed an "enlightened despot." Mexico's greatest need now was "a strong hand which can give her peace and repose."<sup>92</sup>

That was not all of the story. A week passed in which the dispositions of Godkin and his associates were not improved by reports of the continued shooting of Maximilian's officers. Forgotten was the enforcement of Maximilian's brutal decree of October 3, 1865, as "The Week," with typical Godkin irony, reported that

Since 1793, in France, there has hardly ever been such a glorious vindication of Republican liberty against foreign tyrants. If Mexico is not improved by the present processes it must be a very remarkable country — that is, if such a brave people needs improvement. It is not every nation that would have the courage to kill an unarmed emperor and scores of generals inside the same month, read and publish their dying letters to their wives, and embalm their bodies for sale to their relatives.<sup>93</sup>

Realizing, perhaps, that he may have gone too far, Godkin permitted the *Nation* elsewhere in its columns to back-track somewhat. An unidentified writer took the *London Times* to task for having implied—as many felt the *Nation* itself had done—that the execution of Maximilian was reprehensible in a class sense, that is, that a European gentleman "had been slain by Mexicans and half-breeds."<sup>94</sup> The *Nation* hastened to clarify its position. The English press, it asserted, had mistaken the condemnation of the tragedy by the "larger and better portion" of Americans for a belief that the social status of Maximilian should have entitled him to better treatment. Those in the United States who had condemned the execution, explained the

*Nation*, had done so simply because "they felt it would bring great discredit on the republican cause . . . ." <sup>95</sup>

Despite this, Godkin and his associates—who by their equivocal utterances had done nothing to save Maximilian—evidently considered the dead man a martyr. Whatever the Austrian's faults, the *Nation* declared, he was a "civilized man trying to reign over barbarians." For this he had achieved some of the "honors of martyrdom" even "in the eyes of a vast number of good people who thought his coming to Mexico wholly wrong." <sup>96</sup>

## VI

With this, the Mexican imbroglio, at least so far as Godkin and the *Nation* were concerned, was officially at an end. Benito Juarez, it may be said in passing, went on to gain new honors while attempting to lead his country out of the turbulence of the intervention period into a period of stability and progress. The *Nation* advocated his re-election in 1867, three months after Godkin's blast, and praised him thereafter. <sup>97</sup>

As for the role of Godkin in the events just concluded, there was none of the usual final recapitulation in which he somewhat egotistically lauded the *Nation* for its course of action. Perhaps this was because he was aware that in this case there was no valid reason for self-congratulation.

## The Alabama Controversy

The second major complication in American foreign relations bequeathed by the Civil War was the so-called *Alabama* Controversy. The dispute had for its basis United States claims that Great Britain had violated her status as a neutral during the Civil War by giving overt aid and encouragement to the Southern Confederacy.<sup>1</sup> The claims centered around the wholesale destruction of Northern commerce by five vessels, chief among them the *Alabama*, built for the Confederacy in Great Britain and subsequently aided by the British.

Many Americans at the time, including Secretary of State Seward and Minister to England Charles Francis Adams, contended that British liability went further than the depredations of the *Alabama* and her sister ships. The launching of these vessels, it was alleged, was directly traceable to Britain's recognition of Confederate belligerency early in the struggle. The position taken was that the Queen's neutrality proclamation had been put forth in 1861 in undue haste and hence was in itself evidence of animus toward the United States. This unfriendly feeling, so the American argument ran, accounted for the lack of British precautions in preventing the *Alabama* from leaving England and the subsequent failures to arrest her on stops at various British ports. Charles Francis Adams took the position that all the naval power built up by the Confederacy could be attributed directly to the Queen's proclamation.<sup>2</sup>

The erstwhile pro-Confederate *Saturday Review* of London now surprisingly argued: "This hasty recognition of the South was practically connected with the fitting out of the *Alabama*. It instilled the belief into shipbuilders that the English government would procede very calmly in interrupting their operations on behalf of the South."<sup>3</sup>

While Earl Russell was Prime Minister, the British government rebuffed repeated efforts by the United States to bring the claims to its attention.<sup>4</sup> But as the dispute dragged on into the postwar years, it became increasingly evident that the best interests of the two countries would not be served by prolonging it. Hopes for a settlement brightened in 1866 with the accession to power of Russell's successor, Lord Stanley. Stanley let it be known that he would be receptive to proposals that the claims for direct damages from the operations of the *Alabama* and her sister ships be submitted to arbitration. But he made it clear that his government would resist the introduction of any side claims, especially those connected with the recognition of Confederate belligerency.<sup>5</sup>

Godkin followed developments in the controversy intently. At first, with one important exception, his sympathies were officially on the American side. The exception occurred on July 20, 1865, when the *Nation* launched what was apparently a trial balloon in the form of an editorial sharply criticizing certain aspects of the American case and recommending that the belligerent rights claim be dropped. The editorial ran into such rough sailing that Godkin publicly denied authorship of it or agreement with its views.<sup>6</sup> Beset on the one hand by Radical stockholders dissatisfied (among other things) with his vacillating Negro policy, and on the other by patriots who, because of his British origins and proclivities, branded him "unAmerican," he found it expedient to tread carefully until he could get control of the *Nation*. But by 1868, with no settlement of the controversy yet in sight, Godkin was becoming openly critical of the American case against Great Britain. In the *Nation* in February of that year he urged Secretary of State Seward to drop the belligerent rights question and concentrate on the *Alabama* claims. In the same editorial, somewhat contradic-

torily, he scolded the British for refusing to entertain the disputed claim.<sup>7</sup>

Godkin's arguments were those employed a month before by the *Saturday Review*.<sup>8</sup> Since it took about three weeks for the British journals to reach New York, it is fair to suggest that he was merely copying the *Saturday Review's* argument. The substance of the official British argument was that "policy" was not a proper subject for arbitration. Although the timing of the Queen's proclamation was officially held by the British government to be above reproach, that government meant, in any case, to be sole judge as to the propriety of its act. But, as Godkin—and the *Saturday Review* before him—correctly pointed out, if no point of policy could ever be submitted to an arbiter without loss of national dignity, any talk of arbitration would be ridiculous.

In November, 1868, Ulysses S. Grant was elected President of the United States. The expiring Johnson Administration made a last-minute effort to gain credit for the settlement of the dispute, now going into its seventh year. After one miscarriage,<sup>9</sup> negotiations which Reverdy Johnson had been carrying on in London finally bore fruit in January, 1869, in the Johnson-Clarendon Convention. Going beyond the scope of the *Alabama* controversy, the instrument sought to provide machinery for the settlement of all outstanding matters in dispute between Great Britain and the United States. (Among them were the vexatious disputes over the San Juan Islands [northwest boundary] and the northeastern fisheries.) But there was one significant omission. The treaty failed to recognize the explosive belligerent rights claim. Mainly for this reason, but for several others as well (not the least of which was the general disapproval of certain indiscretions on the part of the American minister in England), the treaty was not well received in the United States. Hamilton Fish, Grant's choice to replace Seward as Secretary of State, joined in the chorus of disapproval.

Godkin, however, writing in the *Nation* shortly after the Johnson-Clarendon Convention had gone before the Senate, was prepared to recommend acceptance of the treaty. He pointed out that the foolish actions of Reverdy Johnson—the Mary-



lander had, among other indiscretions, fraternized in England with the unrepentant builder of the *Alabama*—ought not to be a basis for prejudging it.<sup>10</sup> He further urged that “sentiment” not be a bar to a settlement. “There are heights of national indignation and depths of national wrongs,” he observed, “for which there is no remedy but war. . . . But once a nation agrees to submit to arbitration, it passes at once out of the domain of feeling into that of reason; or, to speak more literally, lays down its arms and goes into court.”<sup>11</sup>

Nor was it a mark against the treaty, in the opinion of Godkin, that it ruled out any possibility of getting “the full amount of damage the United States has sustained at sea.” The country, he admonished, should ask itself whether “war would do better; whether after having fought England, we should be less out of pocket than we shall be after receiving payment for all losses sustained by the *Alabama* and her coadjutors.” He brushed aside the popular fear that a tribunal might under the terms of the treaty admit the claims of the Confederate bond-holders. (Over \$12,000,000 had been subscribed, mostly in England, to a loan floated by a French banking firm for the Southern Confederacy in 1863.) When the British insisted upon advancing such claims, he commented, it would be time “to get into a proper state of indignation over them.”<sup>12</sup>

By early March, 1869, it was apparent that the Johnson-Clarendon Convention would be rejected by the Senate. The English journals were following developments with great interest. In February, the *Spectator*, for which Godkin usually had much respect, charged that sentiment controlled the American case. The *Spectator* likened the attitude of the United States to that of “an angry woman, who, when every possible conciliation consistent with self-respect” had been exhausted, took refuge in “the sulks.” It continued:

They do not care about damages; they are indifferent to reparation; they will not be bothered with arbitrations; they do not want to fight; they do not desire amity; one thing, and one thing, only, will content them, that they shall have the last word . . . . They were insulted,



so they were, and, they won't take the bracelet, so they won't, and they were never in the wrong, and Edwin shall say so, before they'll kiss and be friends; and if not, they'll wait, they will, and pay him off some day.<sup>13</sup>

Godkin reacted to the comments of the *Spectator* as might a father who has intimated to the whole neighborhood that his son needs a dressing down but perversely refuses to let anyone but himself administer it. He worked up considerable heat in contemplating the *Spectator's* claim that sentiment dominated the American position. The British, he pointed out, were in no position to throw stones. What had made the British recognition of Confederate belligerency such an issue in the United States was the belief that it "was dictated by sentiment, and that sentiment one of extreme dislike to American government and society."<sup>14</sup>

To the argument of the *Spectator* that the concession of belligerent rights was a legal right which only tortured reasoning would construe as an unfriendly act, Godkin retorted: "The right to laugh and clap your hands when your neighbor's house is on fire is also an undoubted legal right; but you cannot prevent him regarding it as at the same time an indication of hostility, particularly if followed by a good deal of abuse and derision."<sup>15</sup> When British papers vied with one another, he continued, in holding the North up to scorn—when Union soldiers were pictured daily as "drunken ravishers and marauders"—"when the exploits of the *Alabama*, began to be talked of as a matter for national pride, and her builder was cheered in the House of Commons—of course Americans were confirmed in their suspicion that the original recognition of the Confederacy as a belligerent was an indication of a really unfriendly feeling."<sup>16</sup> The editor concluded with a shrewd analysis of the current American feeling toward England. As he wrote:

If a friend soundly kicked me, it would of course, from one point of view, be absurd for me to continue to look gloomy whenever he came in sight, and refuse to transact business with him for a long while afterwards, and

would of course lay me open to the charge of taking a womanish and sentimental view of a very regrettable incident; but my reply would be a good and sufficient reply — that I was human, and had been so created that I did not like being kicked, and that the insult rankled in my breast long after the physical pain had disappeared from my back . . . .<sup>17</sup>

## II

England, from the viewpoint of the United States, had waited too long to offer the olive branch. To Americans in 1869 the Johnson-Clarendon Convention seemed “too little and too late.” On April 13 it was struck down, with a lone dissenting vote, by the Senate. Senator Charles Sumner, powerful chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, used the occasion to deliver the memorable speech in which he severely censured England for her course during the war and hinted at a staggering list of damages owing the United States. The claims of Sumner, on the whole, were those with which the American public had already been made familiar. But presented as they were in one sweeping deliverance, they pointed to a claim of such astronomical size (over two billion dollars) that cautious men shook their heads.

For example, it was estimated that the “lift” which the recognition of belligerent rights, together with British material aid, had given the Confederacy kept her in the fight for at least two additional years. The direct and indirect damages from the Confederate cruisers alone, according to Sumner’s figures, came to \$125,000,000, and the expenses of the war after Gettysburg were known to be around two billion dollars. But Sumner was merely establishing a case for subsequent bargaining. It was well known that he wanted Canada as the price of the settlement. In August the British high Tory *Blackwood’s Magazine* in a chauvinistic editorial bluntly charged that the desire for Canada was keeping the United States from making a fair settlement of the *Alabama* case. At home a writer in the *North American Review* was in substantial agreement.<sup>18</sup>

The Sumner speech, which was printed and distributed over the country, touched a popular chord and became almost overnight a symbol of the pent-up hatred of the North toward England. Even Godkin's criticism of it was mild. (Ten months later, however, he was to write that "no sensible man" had paid any attention to the speech.<sup>19</sup>) Writing on April 29, he acknowledged that Sumner had stated correctly the national feeling and had shown "with great force that ocean belligerence is 'a fact and not a principle.'" Nevertheless the editor was frankly tired of hearing about the belligerency question. In his opinion it was being harped on to the exclusion of the real issue: damages for the depredations of the *Alabama* and her sisters. His advice was that the United States settle for an *apology* and compensation for the *Alabama* and leave the discussion of the causes of her sailing to the "debating clubs."<sup>20</sup>

In Godkin's eyes the villain in the dispute was still officially John Bull. But he made clear his opinion that Uncle Sam's armor was becoming badly tarnished in the course of doing battle with him. The new turn of events given the controversy by Sumner's speech stimulated him in May, 1869, to deliver a trenchant sermon on the use of international law. He took roughly the position espoused by a writer in the *North American Review* the preceding month.<sup>21</sup> "Knowing, as we do, that society is full of wrongs of all sorts," he scolded, "which of us would be willing to live in a community in which even the very best man was allowed to go about and give everybody what he thought was his deserts?"<sup>22</sup> On other occasions Godkin scoffed at international law.<sup>23</sup>

Sumner's speech had been greeted with anguished howls in England.<sup>24</sup> After studying the angry editorials in the English papers, Godkin came up with some brand new conclusions. Briefly, they added up to the somewhat belated advice (*apropos* the Sumner speech) that "taunts, defiance, and passionate charges . . . have no place in civilized diplomacy, and it is not till the resources of diplomacy are exhausted that the war-drum should be beaten."<sup>25</sup> The hard-to-please publicist was willing, however, to accord one virtue to the speech—it had at least brought home to the British the fact that the American people

had been "deeply offended" by the course the English had taken during the war. (Two years later Sir Stafford Northcote, one of the negotiators of the Treaty of Washington, wrote Sumner: "Though I must own your speech was somewhat sharp I verily believe that it taught us a valuable lesson in that respect.")<sup>26</sup> Sensible Englishmen, explained Godkin, had become so used to ignoring the vile American press that they were unaware, until Sumner's speech, of the inflamed state of American opinion. And Congress had done nothing to remedy the situation:

There is not, and has not been for years a serious debate in either branch on foreign questions. In the House, the illustrious Banks has it all his own, and his speeches and resolutions have long ago ceased to influence any rational person in either hemisphere. In the Senate, the work of commenting on English policy has been left to Mr. Chandler, but no American has ever had the face to ask any foreigner to heed him.<sup>27</sup>

### III

The failure of the Johnson-Clarendon Convention to gain ratification dashed hopes for an early settlement of the *Alabama* dispute. Sumner's speech, to make matters worse, erected a barrier between the two nations which seemed well-nigh insurmountable. The dispute dragged on through the summer and fall of 1869. With no new sensations to report, public interest waned. Godkin turned his attention to domestic affairs.

But on December 30, 1869, the editor returned briefly to the controversy. This time his inspiration for writing was a note from Hamilton Fish to Lord Clarendon, published the previous week. In reality composed by Caleb Cushing, the note, though moderately phrased, followed the views of Senator Sumner so closely as to leave Godkin with some apprehensions concerning the fitness of Secretary Fish. What he most objected to was Fish's assertion that the recognition of Confederate belligerency, viewed in the light of England's subsequent conduct, amounted to a "virtual act of war." Such a view of the controversy, Godkin ejaculated, served "nobody's purpose but those of that large class of political porpoises to whom inter-

national law and international relations serve simply as an elastic medium in which to spout and tumble.”<sup>28</sup>

Professor Nevins is thus somewhat in error when he states (anent the note) that “all American editors agreed that [Fish] had presented the case with adequate emphasis and great ability.”<sup>29</sup> English reaction to the note ranged from the hostility of “Historicus” (Vernon Harcourt), writing in the *London Times*, to the semi-friendliness of the *Spectator*, which thought Fish’s dispatches contained less buncombe than those of his predecessor Seward.<sup>30</sup>

Fish in his note had offered no concrete proposals for terminating the dispute. The British government, for its part, was not prepared to initiate new proposals only to see them go the way of the Johnson-Clarendon Convention. Thus a “diplomatic interlude” began late in 1869 which lasted for more than a year. When Godkin returned to the controversy ten month later, it was to reiterate his stand of the previous year against Sumner’s doctrine of “consequential damages” and to restate his new-found opposition to referring the belligerency question to arbitration. (It will be recalled that he had earlier supported such a move.) Moreover, prompted by an article in a leading European journal of international law, he was now convinced that any attempts to extract a “formal apology” from the British would be mischievous.<sup>31</sup> He did not pretend to deny that the United States was entitled to exact something more of England than just a cash settlement for the direct claims. What irked him, however, was the “delay of the Administration in stating the something more.”<sup>32</sup>

A few days later Secretary Fish indicated to the British minister in Washington that the “something more” he wanted was “some recognition of a wrong *done*, some *expression of regret*, some *kind word*.” Nothing was said about the indirect claims.<sup>33</sup>

Commercial motives invariably shaped Godkin’s judgments on public questions. His impatience at the lack of a settlement was in no small measure linked to the complaints of the parties, chiefly speculators, financially interested in the settlement of the dispute. “What is gained,” he demanded in the *Nation*



in October, 1870, "by delay that can compensate for the gross injustice of letting the sufferers by the *Alabama* depredations die off without compensation?"<sup>34</sup> The next month he urged the Administration to stop dallying, and "either to adjust and pay their claims at once itself" or push the case against England with speed and vigor.<sup>35</sup> It is interesting to note that President Grant, in his annual message to Congress the next month, proposed that Congress take steps to do this. Some of the *Alabama* claimants were influential men. Pressure on the Administration from this quarter had become heavy, as Fish informed the Cabinet on October 4, two days before Godkin's editorial was published.<sup>36</sup>

Meanwhile, Senator Sumner had broken with the Administration. Up to this point the fear had preyed on the minds of many, including Godkin, that the Administration would adopt Sumner's advanced view of the controversy and demand sovereignty over Canada as the price of a settlement of the dispute. With this fear now largely dispelled, Secretary Fish was free to proceed with a minimum of quarterbacking from the sidelines. Negotiations were taken out of the hands of Minister Motley at London and shifted to Washington. Fish's views were still too close to those of Sumner to permit complete harmony in the negotiation.<sup>37</sup> But after weeks of preliminary sparring, it became evident that both parties were willing to give ground in order to reach a settlement. Late in February, 1871, a joint high commission convened in Washington to draw up an instrument. Two and one-half months of amicable discussion produced the Treaty of Washington, May 8, 1871.

The treaty, a comprehensive document containing forty-three articles, was generally well received in the United States. The Senate consented to its ratification on May 24, 1871. Significantly, the document omitted mention of the explosive issue of indirect damages. But it contained important British concessions which some Americans, Godkin among them, had believed would not be made. One was a frank expression by the British of "regret" for the escape of the *Alabama*. The treaty provided for an arbitral commission to meet at Geneva later in the year to adjudicate all outstanding matters in dispute between the United States and England.<sup>38</sup>

## IV

The Treaty of Washington raised hopes for an amicable settlement of the *Alabama* controversy higher than at any time in ten years. But when the Geneva commission met on December 15, 1871, the British representatives were handed an American case which contained not only the direct claims but the controversial indirect claims as well, including an unfortunate allusion to the cost of the war "after the battle of Gettysburg."<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, "the Case," as it was quickly dubbed, was at first received calmly in London. Then British editors took a second look. There was an explosion. Even journals normally friendly to the United States, such as the *Daily News* and the *Spectator*, joined in the clamor.

At home, meanwhile, Godkin's mounting resentment over Administration failure to heed his advice was pushing him toward an openly pro-British position in the controversy. The new turn of events sent him flying fully armed into the fray—on the British side. After reading the London papers, he warned his readers that the latest development had thrown the British public into "a fever of excitement." Crying that the Treaty of Washington had been from the first "a string of humiliations" for the British, he hotly declared that it was now in danger, through American belligerence and stupidity, of being thrown out altogether.<sup>40</sup>

The sudden British outcry following the initially calm reception given the presentation of the American case caught President Grant and Secretary Fish unawares. It seemed to them almost to have been manufactured.<sup>41</sup> The American case, it is safe to say, had come as no surprise to the British government. William M. Evarts had several weeks earlier dropped a printed copy of it on the streets of Washington. Evidence was strong that it was picked up and sold at the British Legation.<sup>42</sup> But Godkin, who habitually looked for the worst, pretended no surprise at the British explosion. He angrily echoed the British charge that the indirect claims had been disposed of by the "apology" in the Treaty of Washington.<sup>43</sup>

There is no evidence that any such *quid pro quo* was intended by the American commissioners, although there appears

to have been an honest misunderstanding by the British representatives on this point. The expression of regret had been an essential condition with Secretary Fish from the beginning. Moreover, the enacting part of the Treaty, far from eliminating the indirect claims, could, by one construction, be said to have included them. The five American commissioners were unanimous in denying that an agreement had been reached by the High Commission to exclude the indirect claims.<sup>44</sup>

Throughout the winter and the following spring Godkin continued to ridicule the American case. On February 15, 1872, he cogently summed up the stalemate in the negotiations as follows:

All that the United States ask is that they may be allowed to claim something which they confess they do not expect to get, and all that England insists upon is, that this little ceremony may not be gone through in her presence. . . . The philosophers have to put up their wisdom, and the lawyers stow away their lore, till Mr. Gladstone agrees to let General Grant ask for \$1,500,000,000, which he assures him he does not expect him to pay, and which Mr. Gladstone swears before high heaven he never will pay, come what will.<sup>45</sup>

Godkin was of the firm opinion that the latest hitch in the proceedings was wholly the fault of the United States. The Administration, he charged, had devoted itself to putting forth "feigned issues" and "sham claims." It would be "almost an offense against civilization to ask the first Board of Arbitration ever set up to go through the farce of hearing [Britain's] liability on [the indirect claims] seriously argued and solemnly decided."<sup>46</sup>

Godkin, at one stage of the negotiations, admitted the difficulty of getting trustworthy information. He alleged in the *Nation* that such a blanket of secrecy had been thrown over the American side of the negotiations that whatever information was available on the *Alabama* question was "mainly composed of vague rumors picked up by newspaper correspondents." There was no such secrecy in Europe, he contended. There, people "are enabled to exercise a supervision over their foreign

relations which, if faulty, is not faulty for want of information."<sup>47</sup>

He drew up a bill of particulars against the United States government. In part his charges ran as follows: The "absurd case" which the United States government was trying to get before the Geneva Tribunal had been rushed into print without benefit of expert advice. It should have been entrusted to the ablest lawyers and diplomats in the country. Yet it was done entirely by one man, and he of dubious qualifications, "Bancroft Davis . . . Did he indeed submit it to any one till he had it in print, when it was practically too late for any jurist of standing to give it careful consideration . . .?"<sup>48</sup>

Secretary Davis, contrary to Godkin's allegation, had submitted a draft of the case to a battery of lawyers and political scientists. They included Secretary Fish's law partner William Beach Lawrence, Caleb Cushing, Secretary Fish, Judge Hoar, R. H. Dana, Jr., and President Woolsey of Yale. Godkin obviously knew this but he was not willing to concede that the Administration might be acting in good faith. The last three of these men, he later claimed, had no recollection of seeing in the draft that they approved the claim "for the expenses of the war after Gettysburg." "Nay," cried Godkin, "we venture to assert that this gigantic absurdity was inserted, in the case of some of them, after their revision had taken place . . ."<sup>49</sup> His attitude was well summed up in the private comment of Prime Minister Gladstone to Lord Granville that Secretary Davis' "bunkum and . . . trash might be handled in some degree as 'Americanism' due to want of knowledge of the world of European manners."<sup>50</sup>

Historian James Ford Rhodes has in this, as in his treatment of the entire *Alabama* controversy, closely paralleled the Godkin version.<sup>51</sup> Yet the truth is that *at the time* the indirect claims received virtually unanimous endorsement.

## V

While Godkin busied himself attacking the American case at home, Bancroft Davis was performing Herculean labors in garnering support for it abroad. The British, he reported to

Secretary Fish from Europe in February, were spending money heavily in an attempt to control the German and French press. Nor was this the only problem with which the harrassed assistant Secretary of State was faced. Besides Anglophilic editors like Godkin at home, American diplomatic representatives abroad were doing nothing to help.<sup>52</sup> Fortunately, Davis had a substantial "expense" fund of his own with which to "influence" the French and German press. The altered tone of the foreign press was soon apparent from the clippings which began arriving at the desk of Secretary Fish. By the end of the month Davis was able to report to his superior his opinion that "the Continental press is generally with us."<sup>53</sup>

For four months during the winter and spring of 1872 both the arbitration and the Treaty of Washington hung in the balance. Fortunately, friends of peace on both sides of the Atlantic were active. Business men, watching American securities tumble on the European market, now bestirred themselves to bring pressure on the Administration. In April, Secretary Fish proposed to the British government a formula for settlement whereby the United States would agree not to press the indirect claims if Great Britain in turn would bind herself never to put forth similar ones against the United States. The British reply to the proposal on May second was unsatisfactory, and Fish and Grant were adamantly opposed to any further concessions.

The next move was up to John Bull. Finally on May 10, 1872, Minister Schenck in London cabled Fish of a new British proposal, one which he was certain the United States would accept. It called for an Additional Article to the Treaty of Washington by which the United States would drop the indirect claims on condition that Great Britain would join it in a pledge that neither nation would in the future prefer a similar claim against the other. The news leaked out to the American press on May 14th.<sup>54</sup> This appeared to be the break for which everyone had been waiting. The Treaty of Washington, it seemed, was safe.

But what of Godkin? Having worked himself into a lather of anticipation of the destruction of the treaty, he found no words with which to rejoice at the sudden turn of events. Instead, writing on May 16, he preached another trenchant sermon



against wrong-doing. Both parties to the controversy came in for censure, but the editor saved his warmest coals for the heads of his adopted countrymen. This time he broke with his customary practice of blaming the Administration and the Senate for the nadir to which the dispute had fallen; it was now the American people who were alleged to be at fault.

Whereas two months before Godkin had found that the claim for indirect damages was considered "absurd and indefensible by every lawyer of standing in the United States," he now complained that the "people and leading lawyers of the country" had all along been engaged in a "conspiracy of silence" about the question. Even the newspapers had been dumb. They had "kept quiet as mice, and the lawyers imitated them — all leaving Mr. Fish to get out of the scrape as best he could . . . ." None was apparently "bold enough and honest enough" to urge the Secretary of State to do the right thing, "whatever that might be." As a consequence, Fish "had to grope his way to a conclusion."<sup>55</sup> A writer in the *Atlantic Monthly*, on the other hand, was certain that the Administration had continued to maintain the indirect claims out of a "weak sensitiveness to public opinion" and a "foolish sense of national pride."<sup>56</sup> Either view — Godkin had offered them both — was calculated to please the British press. The *London Times* on June 11, 1872, devoted a whole column to praising Godkin's views.

Hopes for a settlement of the controversy on the basis of the proposed additional article had risen too high, as was apparent by the end of May, 1872. The United States Senate had lost no time in approving the article, but in so doing had amended the preamble to clarify its ambiguous terminology. This, it would appear, was exactly what the British government — with an eye to possible indirect claims on the United States stemming from any future Fenian raids into Canada — did not want. It rescinded the whole proposal. So matters stood when the call for convening the Geneva arbitration on June 15th was issued.

Thus it fell upon the hard-working Bancroft Davis and the American member of the Tribunal, Charles Francis Adams, to find a way to break the deadlock. Secretary Fish made known

to Adams (through Davis) that he expected no award on the indirect claims. Nevertheless, he felt that the question should be disposed of so that it would not remain a perpetual cloud over Anglo-American relations.<sup>57</sup> Accordingly, at the instigation of Davis, Adams induced his colleagues to render an extra-legal opinion to the effect that if the Tribunal were competent to rule on the indirect claims it would reject them.<sup>58</sup> This action enabled the claims to remain in the American case but dispelled British fears that they would figure in the award. The way was now cleared for a discussion of what Godkin had all along contended was the real question before the Tribunal: How much direct damages did Great Britain owe the United States for the activities of the Confederate commerce destroyers launched in England?

The final decision of the Geneva Tribunal was handed down on September 14, 1872. By its terms the United States was awarded \$15,500,000 for damages directly arising from the operation of the *Alabama* and two other Confederate cruisers. Godkin, writing five days later in the *Nation*, expressed satisfaction with the verdict. He seized the occasion again to taunt Bancroft Davis for the indirect claims. Davis' claims, sneered he, had belonged from the beginning "to that pleasant field of fancy in which Artemus Ward and Josh Billings have won renown."<sup>59</sup>

In fact, declared Godkin, the conduct of the entire controversy had been a discredit to American diplomacy. He conceded, however, that the choice of Charles Francis Adams as the American member of the Geneva Tribunal had been a fortunate one. Similarly, the role of Secretary Fish, though not brilliant, had nonetheless been "highly respectable."<sup>60</sup> But the only unqualified praise from the captious editor went to himself, as he wrote:

And now, before passing away, we trust for ever, from this long and exciting controversy, it is perhaps due to those of our readers who have honored us with their confidence and forbearance, to call their attention to the fact that no doctrine the *Nation* has ever combated has received any countenance from the arbitrators, while every position it has maintained has been fully confirmed.<sup>61</sup>

The *Nation*, declared Godkin, had "for seven years scouted the notion that the concession of 'belligerent rights' to the Confederates was of any importance in the controversy (except as a bit of evidence on the point of animus), in opposition to the popular view that it was the very head and front of England's offence." Moreover, it had "insisted all along" that England should apologize for the escape of the *Alabama* and had "predicted that she would." (This was not exactly true.) Finally, "we derided 'the indirect claims,' and they have been for ever barred and extinguished amidst the laughter of the civilized world and the blushes of their authors."<sup>62</sup>

Insofar as he took it, Godkin had some reason for self-congratulation. Ignoring the relatively minor contradictions in the *Nation's* position as the controversy developed, he could more or less truthfully say that his journal had been consistent. He might have added that, inasmuch as he had prejudged the case, there was little reason for his treatment of it to have been otherwise.

But Godkin's readers had not heard the last of the *Alabama* case. Sir Alexander Cockburn, the choleric British member of the Geneva Tribunal, refused to sign the award and filed a strongly worded protest to it. On October 15, 1872, the *Nation* reported its publication. The Anglophilic Godkin gave to Cockburn's heatedly partisan arguments such a respectful hearing as he customarily denied to his fellow Americans who took similar liberties with their rhetoric.<sup>63</sup>

Cockburn seemingly had Godkin all but persuaded that the Geneva decision was less a victory for the United States than it was a triumph for arbitrary Continental law. How so? Article VI of the Treaty of Washington began the evil, charged Cockburn, when it provided the famous "Three Rules" for the conduct of the Geneva arbitration. The rules, which were given a retroactive effect in order to embrace the dispute, defined neutral obligations toward warring powers in much stricter terms than heretofore. The Treaty stipulated that later the Three Rules would be jointly referred to the Continental powers for adoption. "This [Article VI] will be a hard rule for us as well as the British," Godkin warned, "the more particularly as all Tribunals

of Arbitration are likely to contain a majority of Continental Europeans." Events proved Godkin's fears groundless. Owing to British obstructionism, the Three Rules were never referred for adoption.

The skillfulness with which Godkin had performed his about-face as a result of the Cockburn dissent did not hide the fact that he was being extraordinarily gullible. Earlier in the controversy he had given short shrift to England's plea that she lacked machinery in her municipal law for the prevention of the escape of the *Alabama*. As he declared editorially in 1869: "The refusal of the Palmerston government to make good the defects in English law was a plain and shameless evasion of their duty."<sup>64</sup> Even this was a characteristic oversimplification on Godkin's part.<sup>65</sup>

But the British government did not contest the *Alabama* award. Cockburn's ill-humored performance was soon forgotten, and a special claims court at Geneva went to work on other cases. Before it completed its labors, it had disposed of 489 claims involving Americans and Britons, with a total of \$1,929,819 damages being assessed against the United States on behalf of British subjects. The San Juan boundary dispute, as provided by the Treaty of Washington, was submitted to the German emperor who upheld the American contentions.<sup>66</sup>

A third arbitration provided for by the Treaty of Washington had to do with the grievances of Canada arising from the handling by the Joint High Commission of the long-standing northeastern fisheries question. The Canadians complained with reason that the treaty makers at Washington had, in redrawing the Treaty of 1818, given Americans excessive privileges in the North Atlantic sea fishery. After four years of haggling over the selection of an umpire and other technicalities, the commission finally met at Halifax in 1877 and awarded \$5,500,000 to Great Britain. The award was much higher than had been expected. The United States commissioner refused to sign it, and feeling against paying it ran high in the United States.

In March, 1878, Godkin made the fisheries question the subject of an editorial.<sup>67</sup> Although he shared the popular feeling that the Halifax award was too high, he strongly disapproved of



the agitation against paying it. The question all boiled down, said he, to a simple question of national morality. "The opportunities of cheating which are offered to a government are very numerous and easy. If, on the other hand, it most of all desires to play a worthy part in human society . . . as a moral being . . . it will have every now and then to submit to some pecuniary loss."<sup>68</sup>

Of particular interest in Godkin's editorial was his unflattering allusion to James G. Blaine. The Maine legislator was obviously being groomed to succeed Ben Butler as the *Nation's* number one "whipping boy." According to Godkin, Blaine was among those agitating against payment of the fisheries award. Godkin dismissed as irrelevant the charges, reportedly made by Blaine, that the umpire, a Belgian diplomat, had gotten his job through British connivance. The editor was inclined to blame the setback on the United States government for not having, as he asserted, sent a stronger man to Halifax.

In defense of Secretary of State Fish, it should be said that he had been guided in his choice of commissioner by the senators from the two states most directly affected, Massachusetts and Maine. All four legislators agreed in recommending the man who was chosen, a fisheries expert, named Kellogg.<sup>69</sup> As for Godkin's charges against Blaine, they would appear from the available evidence to have been untrue. The position of Blaine toward the controversy did not differ materially from that of the *Nation*.<sup>70</sup>

## VI

To return to the *Alabama* controversy again. The San Juan boundary award had satisfied national claims rather than individual claims. But what of the *Alabama* award? Americans had become so used to viewing as *national* the case against Great Britain that they had almost overlooked the fact that it was based largely on individual claims. All during the negotiations, a quiet tug-of-war had been going on between rival speculators in *Alabama* claims. Secretary Fish took cognizance of this when he instructed the American agents at Geneva not to bind the United States in the distribution of the award. One fear, indeed, which



had pressed on him throughout the dispute was that one set of claimants would gain recognition from the British government and weaken the American case by effecting a private settlement. Happily, this did not occur.

On September 6, 1873, British minister Sir Edward Thornton called on Hamilton Fish in his office at the State Department. Without fanfare he paid over to him on behalf of Her Majesty's government a United States Treasury deposit certificate for \$15,500,000.<sup>71</sup> The certificate represented payment for United States bonds purchased by bankers under contract to the British government. With that simple ceremony the international aspect of the *Alabama* controversy was terminated. The distribution of the award — Godkin to the contrary — was a domestic problem. The money was invested as required by law in 5% government bonds awaiting governmental action for its disposition.<sup>72</sup> The stage was thus set for the beginning of an acrimonious domestic controversy that was to last for thirteen years and continue to echo up to the present day. In the course of the controversy, the reasoning of Godkin became so tortured as almost to invite the suspicion that he harbored a special interest.

Despite Professor Bemis' indications to the contrary, there was nothing in the wording of the Geneva award to indicate what the specific views of the tribunal were as to its distribution.<sup>73</sup> It was taken for granted that uninsured owners of vessels and cargoes destroyed by the enumerated vessels would be reimbursed. But these were relatively few in number. What of the vast number who had been fully insured? To Godkin it was clear that the arbiters intended that their share of the award should accrue (by subrogation) to the insurance companies as "salvage." Other publicists insisted with equal firmness that the real financial sufferers from the activities of the Confederate commerce destroyers were those shippers who had paid insurance companies the inflated "war risk" premiums.<sup>74</sup> Equally strong, but not likely to win much consideration, was the argument that the American people were the real losers, since the cost of the war premiums had in all likelihood been passed on to the consumer public.

Writing in the *Nation* in January, 1873, Godkin conceded that abstract justice might possibly be on the side of the holders

of war risk insurance. But the claims of the insurance companies were supported by *law*. Hard-pressed in this argument by a skeptical reader, he called on Jeremy Bentham for aid. The *Alabama* award, Godkin reasoned, was not intended as charity; it was purely a matter of *business*, of "things recognized by the courts on grounds of utility, which long usage has converted into practical justice . . . ." <sup>75</sup> Under his facile pen the Geneva award all but metamorphosed from a verdict in favor of actual damages into an express award to the insurance companies of "profit." So what if the insurance companies *hadn't* suffered losses from the Confederate cruisers? It was cheating — just as General Butler's "repudiation" scheme of 1867 was cheating — to deny a man his profit on a speculative venture on the grounds that someone else has lost money in the transaction. <sup>76</sup>

Pursuant to an act of Congress, June 23, 1874, a special Court of Commissioners of *Alabama* Claims was appointed by President Grant. <sup>77</sup> It labored until January 1, 1877, awarding to claimants \$8,350,000 of the \$15,500,000 principal. The court, as had been expected, gave nothing to shippers whose losses had been fully covered by insurance or to insurance companies whose wartime gains could be shown to have exceeded their losses. Only six insurers qualified for a total compensation of \$111,055.23. A supplementary act of Congress, passed on July 22, 1876, opened the way to the eventual consideration of the war premium claims. <sup>78</sup> That year London humor magazine *Punch* listed as one of the articles it did *not* expect to find on display at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition: "Purse manufactured by the Ladies of Philadelphia, wherein the surplus money paid by England in excess of the substantiated *Alabama* claims will be speedily restored (with interest) to the British Treasury." <sup>79</sup>

As Godkin contemplated these latest developments with mounting irritation, his pen led him beyond the bounds of reasoned argument. Three years before he had virtually conceded the question to be one of equity *vs.* the law. Now, according to him, law and equity were synonymous. It was a matter of simple honesty, he indicated in July, 1876. His argument ran as follows: In passing the bill to compensate the purchasers of war risk insurance the House of Representatives had upset the verdict

of the Geneva Tribunal and made a mockery of the whole arbitration process. It was no wonder that people renounced arbitration and turned to war. "The moment people see that arbitration is used as a cover for a monstrous act of fraud and chicane, there can be no reason for sensible people feeling anything but disgust at it."<sup>80</sup> Legislators who had voted for the bill were men of obliquity of moral vision, and the claim for war premiums which they supported was a swindle concocted by a noted rascal (Benjamin Butler) and supported by dishonest influences.<sup>81</sup>

An unnamed correspondent interrupted the series of Godkin tirades on July 27, 1876, to offer some sound advice about the course the mercurial publicist was taking. In a letter to Godkin he accused the *Nation* of using "intemperance in denunciation" and "unfounded declamation" and of substituting "personal detraction for calm and logical argument." He branded as unworthy the attempt to stigmatize the war premium claimants by associating them with the discredited General Butler. Butler, as the correspondent pointed out, had originated neither the claims nor the bill.<sup>82</sup> Yet Godkin continued the argument with only slight modification in tone for several years. In 1878, with a flagrant disregard for accuracy, he reported that the United States had "shocked the civilized world" by the way it had disposed of the *Alabama* money.<sup>83</sup> Two years later — with nearly \$10,000,000 of the award, principal and accrued interest, still in the Treasury — the *Nation* was urging (and alternately denying that it was urging) that the money be turned over to the insurance companies or else be returned to England.<sup>84</sup> The situation was not lacking in its characteristically unpredictable touches, as, for example, when in 1881 Godkin and his associates singled out for special praise Bancroft Davis' reappointment to the Department of State.<sup>85</sup>

Godkin at length lost his fight. In 1882 a second Court of Commissioners proceeded with the distribution of the remainder of the *Alabama* award in accordance with legislation admitting the war premium claims and claims for damages from Confederate vessels not mentioned in the Geneva Award.<sup>86</sup> By 1887 the last chapter in the long and acrimonious controversy had been virtually closed. Today only its echoes remain.<sup>87</sup>

## Post-War Expansion and the Grant Era

The world was rapidly shrinking in 1865—a fact few Americans appreciated more than did the cosmopolitan editor of the *Nation*. From the beginning, the *Nation's* coverage of the international scene ranked with the most advanced offered by any contemporary American publication. But in 1865 this was none too good. Slowness of communication with Europe often delayed important news dispatches as much as a month in transmission. In diplomatic questions, which ordinarily required an official interchange of views between governments, developments were weeks and sometimes months apart. Hence American editors, Godkin included, found themselves resorting to speculation.

It was no wonder, then, that Godkin and his associates followed the laying of the Atlantic Cable in the summer of 1865 with eager expectancy.<sup>1</sup> But, somewhat characteristically, their ardor cooled when the cable went into operation. In August, 1865, for example, the *Nation* had airily predicted that the new means of communication would insure the triumph of free competition by placing everyone on an even footing as to prices and markets. But on September 27, 1866, Godkin and his colleagues were of the contrary opinion that it might assist in the formation of trusts. The most serious and least substantiated of Godkin's charges against the cable was that its European news agent—an American journalist whom he dubbed the "Cable

newsmonger"—was engaged in a conspiracy to upset the New York money market by sending distorted dispatches from Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Godkin, despite his somewhat ill-natured criticisms, heartily approved of the possibilities for commercial expansion inherent in the operation of the cable. But there was another form of expansion to which he was unalterably opposed — territorial expansion. His opposition was based chiefly on political economy, which he defined in strict Manchester terms as "the knowledge of the working of the laws of human nature which regulates the production and distribution of wealth."<sup>3</sup> The Manchesterites had found colonialism to be incompatible with free trade. It was the doctrine of *laissez faire* which provided intellectual food to the despised "Little Englanders" of the British generation of the Boer War. Godkin, for essentially the same reasons, was a "Little American," but he would not have been in character had he confined himself to this single line of reasoning. For example, there was the related argument of race and culture. The well-known aversion of Godkin to western Americans sprang from the view—oft repeated in the *Nation* under his editorship—that civilization could flourish only in compactly settled areas having a homogeneous population. Shortly after the founding of the *Nation*, that paper began to caution Americans against the dangers of adding a "vast extent of wilderness to our already enormous area." As the *Nation* (1866) saw it:

Our government and society are now suffering greatly from the too rapid and too wide diffusion of our population. Civilization, religion, education, and manners are all injured by the inordinate increase of "frontier life" amongst us. Every interest of our society calls for more condensation of our people and less expansion of our territory.<sup>4</sup>

Godkin from his point of view had good reason for his fears—as events were proving. By no means had all of the expansive energies of the American people between 1861 and 1865 been harnessed to the prosecution of the Civil War. The Westward Movement had continued throughout the conflict, and certain



of its events had served to whet interest in the annexation of Canada. There was, moreover, an undeniable undercurrent of expansionist feeling in American opposition to the French intervention in Mexico.<sup>5</sup> With the cessation of hostilities between the North and South, the stage was accordingly set for a large scale revival of Manifest Destiny.

Foremost among dedicated post-war annexationists was Secretary of State William H. Seward. When, in March, 1867, the opportunity suddenly arose for him to buy Alaska from Russia for \$7,200,000, he seized it without first consulting Congress. The vicissitudes which the treaty underwent before its final acceptance by Congress are well known. Less well known is the measure of popular approval which it gained.<sup>6</sup> The *Nation* opposed the purchase of Alaska, although oddly enough, it did not make it a major issue. Five days after the signing of the treaty, Godkin and his associates devoted a paragraph to lampooning Seward's "chimerical project of saddling us with a frozen desert of a colony," and opposition in a moderate vein followed the next week and the week after. Throughout 1867 and 1868 the *Nation* continued occasionally to criticize the Alaska purchase and other aspects of what it termed the "mania for buying territory."<sup>7</sup> It was not until six years later, in 1874, that the paper was able to announce that Seward's purchase "is very likely to prove a piece of good luck for us, and perhaps in after ages will redound to the credit of Mr. Seward's statesmanship."<sup>8</sup>

The earlier-mentioned fears of Godkin that the Johnson Administration would interfere in Mexico in 1866 had proved groundless,<sup>9</sup> but the editor did not relax his vigilance. In July, 1867, the activities of James Brooks came under editorial scrutiny in "The Week." Brooks, it was asserted, was attempting to get the neutrality laws repealed in order that "filibusters may go in and possess Mexico."<sup>10</sup> Two weeks later the *Nation* enlarged upon its charges. Some "restless Democrats," it seems, were "trying to inaugurate a movement to establish a protectorate" over Mexico, with a view to annexation. The author of the movement, according to rumor, was the brother of a man intensely disliked by Godkin, historian J. S. C. Abbott. The editor lost

no time in verbally demolishing the scheme. Observed "The Week": "When General Sherman gets more than one soldier for every three thousand square miles of hostile Indians, it will be time to talk with Mr. Abbott—on some other subject with which he is more familiar."<sup>11</sup>

There was one notable exception to Godkin's anti-expansionism—Canada. In common with English Cobdenites Goldwin Smith and John Bright he believed that the union of the only two Anglo-Saxon countries in the Western Hemisphere was highly desirable.<sup>12</sup> Most "informed" men, declared the publicist in 1869, supported it. If negotiations for the union were conducted "on its own merits," success would be merely a question of time.<sup>13</sup> But union openly arrived at was one thing—forced annexation was another. Godkin was not in sympathy with the attempt of annexationists in the United States to make Canada the price of a settlement of the *Alabama* controversy.

That Canada was meant to be used as such a pawn was the inescapable conclusion to be drawn from Senator Sumner's *Alabama* claims speech of April 13, 1869. It was also the content of innumerable speeches by Senators Chandler and Trumbull, by the highly influential lobbyist Robert F. Walker, and by Chairman Banks of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. It was the theme of frequent editorials in *Harper's Weekly*, the *New York Times*, the *Herald*, and the *Tribune*. The consensus seemed to be that Britain ought to tender Canada as an offering toward the restoration of harmonious relations. All of which led the Tory *Montreal Gazette* to exclaim: "It seemed to be taken for granted that the people of the dominion could be bartered like so many sheep, if Great Britain and the United States would agree to it."<sup>14</sup>

One popular argument of American expansionists which early drew the ridicule of Godkin was that the cession of Canada would lay the basis for a resumption of friendly relations with England. "What they say to England," he wrote in April, 1869, "is substantially this:"

Your conduct has been villainous and depraved beyond description, and the amount of mischief you have

willfully and maliciously done is simply incalculable, and therefore we shall not allow you even to attempt to pay damages. We should give you a sound thrashing if we were not otherwise occupied just now, but our intention is to give you one at some future day, when we find you in a fix. However, if you make us a present of Canada—which we shall take from you by force if you don't—we shall look upon it as full satisfaction for all the wrongs we have suffered at your hands. . . .<sup>15</sup>

Godkin, as usual, was not careful to avoid inconsistency. On one occasion he conceded that his former countrymen might be coerced into ceding Canada ("but to say that the foundation of a cordial understanding with her can thus be laid is simply ridiculous").<sup>16</sup> Later, he scouted this assumption, assuring his readers that Britain would never surrender that possession without fighting.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, on April 15, 1869, he declared that everything was in favor of a voluntary Canadian union with the United States but "English feeling." The next year, however, he asserted that fully "nine-tenths" of the English public would receive such a move with "open or secret rejoicing."<sup>18</sup> Similar contradictions were apparent in his assertions as to the state of Canadian opinion.<sup>19</sup>

## II

The bitterness between England and the United States engendered by the *Alabama* controversy was given an added fillip in the late 1860's by the activities of the Fenian Brotherhood, a militant organization dedicated to the independence of Ireland from Great Britain. Its leadership and chief support were in the United States, where it claimed 750,000 voters, a sympathetic faction in Congress, and the qualified blessing of several New York newspapers.<sup>20</sup> Late in May, 1866, several hundred green-shirted Fenians under the command of an ex-Union general crossed the border in an abortive attempt at the invasion of Canada. Only prompt action on the part of President Johnson averted an international incident.<sup>21</sup> According to Godkin the President was not entitled to praise for having

carried out an "obvious duty." But the British government conveyed expressions of its gratitude.<sup>22</sup>

Along with redemption of the currency, the Negro, and the politics of Reconstruction, Fenianism was a major topic of discussion in the *Nation* between 1865 and 1868. As its editor wrote in January, 1868: "There is, probably, no question of foreign politics which interests the United States at this moment so much as the Irish question."<sup>23</sup> But the Irish-born Godkin, who was later to be an ardent Home Ruler, did not take Fenianism, or, for that matter, the Irish, very seriously. No intelligent American, he commented at the height of the Fenian agitation, believed what James Stephens, "President" Roberts, or other Irish leaders said on the subject of Irish independence or "would give five cents for their opinion on any other subject under heaven."<sup>24</sup> Fenianism, as Godkin saw it, had "turned away the thoughts of the Irish from all rational schemes of reform" and inspired in them instead a fanatical devotion to the "utterly impossible ideal" of independence that, he exclaimed in 1866, was as "wildly unattainable as the restoration of the Heptarchy."<sup>25</sup> Every "sensible" politician, he reaffirmed on another occasion, knew that Irish independence was a "wild dream," one which could "never be realized for even a month except by the overthrow of the British Empire."<sup>26</sup> If British misrule in Ireland were to be ended, Godkin believed, it would be done through the "cordial cooperation" of enlightened gentlemen, preferably English Liberals, and not by what he termed the "rum-soaked criminal adventurers" who flocked into the Fenian Brotherhood and the Irish Land League.

As should be obvious to the reader from the above, Godkin's weakness for overstatement did not make for an altogether accurate representation of the current Irish unrest. "There is not one American in a thousand," he declared while Fenian popularity was at its height, "who does not laugh in his sleeve over the whole Fenian programme . . . ." "There is not a decent American farmer or mechanic in the free states who would not think even half an hour spent in listening to the 'views' of [Fenian leaders] on either strategy or politics totally wasted."<sup>27</sup>

With the conclusion of hostilities between the North and South in 1865, thousands of militarily trained Americans of Irish descent were abruptly thrown out of employment. It was this single factor, declared Godkin in 1869, which "lifted Fenianism from the position of a little whisky-stained conspiracy in a Chatham Street grog-shop into the rank of a formidable Association, aping the airs, and exercising some of the powers, of a regular government."<sup>28</sup> The editor scoffed at the suggestion that Fenianism was a military threat; in his opinion a "battalion of British police" could easily deal with the whole Fenian "army." If an ally foolhardy enough to invade the British Isles could be found, any aid the Fenians might give him "would be of a kind that would in three weeks either drive a French general mad or cause him to try his Chassepot rifles upon them."<sup>29</sup>

Godkin was capable on occasion of sympathy for the native Fenians in Ireland. In that country, as he once pointed out, "every man who takes the field . . . fights in a trap, and with a halter around his neck." But he had no patience with the Irish-American "blatherskites," as he called them, who went to Ireland to stir up trouble. Just as bad in his opinion were those who remained behind to organize the "Irish Republic" and plan the conquest of Canada "safely behind dry goods counters in the Bowery." They "cross the frontier in arms, knowing that when the fighting begins they can if they please run back in a few minutes to safe and friendly soil."<sup>30</sup> Not all contributors to the *Nation*, however, shared Godkin's low estimate of the military capacity of the Irish. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a colonel of volunteers in the Civil War, declared that in "all the records of the Civil War there was no such thing as an Irish coward."<sup>31</sup>

A major complicating factor in the Fenian problem was the hoary doctrine of indefeasible allegiance. Among the Irish-Americans who descended on Ireland after 1865 were some who had never held British citizenship. The difficulties encountered by the British authorities in distinguishing between native Americans and naturalized Americans born in Ireland contributed to a series of incidents unpopularity known in the United States as the "dungeon cases."<sup>32</sup> With this problem in



mind, Secretary Seward in 1868 entered into negotiations with England looking toward an end to the doctrine, firmly grounded in law, that allegiance to the country of origin followed a man when he emigrated and became a naturalized citizen of another country. The question became a topic of frequent discussion in the press, both in England and the United States. It was frequently alluded to by the *Nation*.<sup>33</sup> Godkin, generally speaking, supported the position of Seward. It remained, however, for Seward's successor to conclude a treaty with England (1870) by which the time-honored British theory, "once a subject—always a subject," passed into the limbo of discarded international usage.<sup>34</sup>

In May, 1870, there was a new Fenian raid in force into Canada, and, like its predecessors, it was a fiasco. After two encounters with the enemy, enough resembling *opera bouffe* that normally sympathetic New York newspapers like the *World* and the *Tribune* were totally alienated, the Fenian commander was ignominiously whisked into custody by a United States marshal. Most of the press now took turns denouncing the authors of the project. The *Nation*, which could truthfully say it had not taken Fenian plans seriously from the start, confined itself mainly to gloating over the discomfiture of the other newspapers. To the *World*, which dwelt on the absurdity of Colonel Starr's having entrenched his green-shirted force ten minutes after it crossed the Canadian border, Godkin addressed the following:

Starr, we are quite sure, knew just as well as the *World* the objections to allowing an invading army to squat down and throw up clay ten minutes after entering the enemy's country. But then, if he were to speak his whole mind, he would tell the *World* that it must not look at him as the head of an army intent on reaching Montreal, but as the head of a mob, which had got into a very bad scrape, and which the soldiers were coming to disperse.<sup>35</sup>

Fenianism, asserted Godkin, was a swindle, a "mode of raising money, for . . . personal use" engaged in by a "gang of impudent and impecunious" impostors.<sup>36</sup> He found it incomprehensible

that the movement should have gained "the countenance of educated Christians and philanthropists." But he was hopeful that it had at last run its course. He noted, as a good sign, that even Horace Greeley's *Tribune* had "on this matter" come under "the control of conscience and common sense."<sup>37</sup>

### III

Fenianism, American style, was only incidentally related to the expansionist spirit. It was Canadian federation rather than the defeat of Fenian schemes which killed annexation. Actually, although the spirit of Manifest Destiny remained alive on this as on other fronts throughout 1869 and 1870, it was getting less and less encouragement from the American public each day. But to the combative Godkin it seemed that everywhere he looked in 1869 he could see the spreading virus of expansionism. To the west it was discernible in the proposed reciprocity treaty with Hawaii, a document which he styled "a noble-looking thing on paper" got up by a handful of self-serving American planters.<sup>38</sup> To the north there was the new colony of "Aliaska" (*sic*), purchased only, it seems, after Russian gold was brought into play. "Who was not paid that ever opened his mouth on the subject?" was the question Godkin asked.<sup>39</sup> To the south there was "sympathy" for the Cubans, plus the proposal to send a battleship to "protect" Santo Domingo—"the most ludicrous," he wrote, "yet made in the House, except the one to recognize 'the Irish Republic' on the strength of the Fenian operations in 1867 . . ."<sup>40</sup>

What was behind all this expansionistic activity? Creeping centralism in government was Godkin's answer. It was all part of a scheme by politicians to enlarge the functions of the federal government in order to create more spoils. The poison of big government, Godkin warned, was subtle; it masqueraded behind high sounding declarations and the support of worthy causes. Yet there was "hardly a scheme before Congress, however innocent in appearance, which involves the outlay of money by the Government, at the bottom of which a speculator is not lying hid."<sup>41</sup> The "fighting editor" did not mince words as he bluntly warned:

Now, all attempts to increase [the Federal bureaucracy] or, in other words, to increase the number of duties the Government has to discharge, all attempts to annex or "protect" or purchase territory, or to send out propagandist missions for the spread of "seminal ideas," or to spread American influence in any way, except through the force of American example, the public may set down unhesitatingly as attempts on the part of a "ring" to make money.<sup>42</sup>

In thus concentrating his attacks on the outward tawdriness of what he once termed the "Chromo-civilization,"<sup>43</sup> Godkin misjudged the soundness of the very economic pillars supporting the Brahmin culture he so admired. In short he complained about the quality of the ropes while the tent poles rotted away. Like William Graham Sumner, Godkin never approved the statement of principles of the American Economic Association. The apostles of state interference, he once declared, were not economists at all, but a pressure group devoted to making the government cater to the wants of the "multitude." "What they are asking us to do is simply to try a hazardous experiment in popular government."<sup>44</sup>

It was not always "politicians," "speculators," and the "criminal element"—the terms were sometimes used interchangeably by Godkin—who were blamed for the "annexation fever," as he called it. Expansionism was, it seems, being encouraged by the public. In April, 1869, he wrote an editorial in which he linked the annexationist spirit to a breakdown in personal and public morals attendant to post-war economic growth. Americans, as their material prosperity grew, were becoming smug and indifferent to public corruption; they looked the other way while judges sold justice, thieves went unwhipped, and a "fourth of the public revenues" was "stolen by knaves and adventurers." Territorial expansion, Godkin warned, could only "stimulate the rapacity and increase the power" of the very class from which "decent" Americans had the most to fear.<sup>45</sup>

Another, and typically American, form of activity which Godkin deplored as being conducive to interference in the affairs of other countries was the national habit of forming cheering

sections for foreign conflicts "in which the United States had no immediate material interest."<sup>46</sup> But this did not prevent the editor from taking sides in the Franco-Prussian War, which broke out in 1870. His ill-concealed contempt for his Irish compatriots was in striking contrast to his admiration for the Prussians. The backwardness of the Irish, he once noted, stemmed from their having not "moved on in the general stream of European progress." Conversely, of Prussia, he observed that there was "no state more 'modern' in the best sense of the word."<sup>47</sup> The Prussian army, declared Godkin in July, 1870, was "fighting for a free press, a free parliament, popular education." It was fighting for "the supremacy of reason over brute force, of the citizen over the soldier, of law over imperial 'decrees,' of an armed people over hired armies, of industry over gambling." The Prussians were, in short, defending "modern civilization against the worst and latest of its enemies."<sup>48</sup> When it was argued by the *New York World* that Prussia, by virtue of its despotic and feudal government, was entitled to no more sympathy than France, Godkin and his associates unabashedly countered with the Machiavellian argument that the ends justify the means. Asserted the *Nation*:

The arrogance of the Prussians there is no denying, and the foreign policy of Bismarck has certainly been thoroughly unscrupulous; but then his unscrupulousness has been displayed in the execution of schemes to which [we] must wish success . . . Frederick William and his minister will pass away. The work of their hands will last, and the Prussia they have aggrandized must certainly long remain that community of the old world to which those who are interested in the improvement of human character through political action will look with most hope.<sup>49</sup>

At the same time, Godkin was fully capable of censuring the Germans. No victorious cause, it seems, could long remain sacred in his eyes, especially when it sought to violate the "laws of trade." To Prussian protests against the British traffic in war materials with France, the editor addressed the stern

rejoinder: "If any country . . . does not choose to keep a navy, or is unable to keep one, we are not to be obliged to make it up to her, whenever she goes to war and gets her ports blockaded, by selling nothing to her adversary which is likely to help prolong the contest."<sup>50</sup>

#### IV

One of Seward's expansionist projects to which Ulysses S. Grant fell a willing heir as President was the Santo Domingo annexation scheme. The Caribbean island republic, with its spacious and strategically located Samaná Bay, had been for twenty years an object of interest among United States military men and expansionists generally.<sup>51</sup> In July, 1869, Grant, his interest whetted by reports of the willingness of the Dominican dictator to hand over his revolution-torn country to the United States, sent one of his aides, General Orville E. Babcock, to the island. A treaty of annexation followed five months later.

Grant's inept handling of the project, aided by public antipathy toward expansionistic excursions into the Latin, Catholic countries to the south, deprived the treaty of the support of much of the press as well as a vocal segment of the President's own party. In New York City both the *Nation* and *Harper's Weekly* vocally opposed annexation, while the *New York Times*, the *Tribune*, and the *World* stressed the doubtful advantages and dubious character of such an acquisition. Only the *Sun* and the *Herald* supported it.<sup>52</sup> Despite the powerful support which the partisans of the President in the Senate gave to the treaty, it failed (June 30, 1870) to pass that body.

But Grant did not discourage so easily. In his annual message to Congress, December 5, 1870, he proposed that a commission be authorized by joint resolution to draw up a new Santo Domingo annexation treaty. This was, of course, a device to evade the requirement of a two-thirds majority.<sup>53</sup> It proved too much even for some of Grant's supporters in Congress. A compromise was finally effected whereby a commission of investigation was authorized to visit the island and report on conditions there. Simultaneously, plans were set afoot to strip



Senator Charles Sumner, who had been largely instrumental in the defeat of the treaty, of his post as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.<sup>54</sup>

Commenting on these developments in his usual critical vein on December 29, 1870, Godkin voiced objection to Republican attacks on Sumner—"from which the goodness of his cause ought to have protected him."<sup>55</sup> Likewise, the decision of the Senate to send a commission of investigation to the island came in for stinging criticism:

. . . we deny the right of Congress to send out any such body even to Santo Domingo till the sense of this country has been distinctly taken on this whole policy of absorbing semi-civilized Catholic states. . . . The first duty of the American Union is to its own people. As long as there is ignorance, poverty, and corruption within its own borders, it owes it not less to civilization than to its own influence and fame not to saddle itself with fresh loads of responsibility . . .<sup>56</sup>

Godkin, who had warmly indorsed the nomination of Grant in 1868, had lately come to have a low opinion of the intelligence of the Civil War hero. He questioned the military value of Santo Domingo, commenting that it was a "profound mystery" just why the United States "would run some severe risk if it should go to war without owning an island in the West Indies." Grant, in addition, did not understand the "laws of trade." He had, it seems, been duped by "some ignorant politician" into believing that "\$100,000 of Dominican products, imported into the United States, would do great harm if they came from the 'Republic of Dominica,' but great good if they came from the 'State of Dominica' in the American Union."<sup>57</sup> As Godkin saw it:

The facts of this St. Domingo affair, we believe, are, that the President — we do not know under what influences — has got it into his head that the United States ought to own half the island of Hayti, and that it is of such serious importance to them to acquire it at once that it is

better. . . . to buy it, and make citizens of 200,000 ignorant Catholic Spanish negroes, than to wait a minute longer.<sup>58</sup>

In at least one of his allegations, that the treaty of annexation had been concluded without the knowledge of Secretary Fish, Godkin was in error. Babcock's formal instructions came from Fish, who, although apparently a somewhat reluctant participant in the negotiations, was fully informed of their progress.<sup>59</sup> Behind the treaty, Godkin indicated, was a band of unscrupulous "operators" (not further identified) who expected to profit from annexation. He urged President Grant to look after his reputation by dropping the Santo Domingo business at once.<sup>60</sup>

In March, 1871, Grant succeeded through his partisans in the Senate in having Senator Sumner removed as chairman of the Foreign Relations committee. From one standpoint, that of dispelling the exaggerated fears that the powerful New Englander stood in the way of the settlement of Anglo-American difficulties, the ouster may have been fortunate. But the true reasons behind it, plus the manner in which it was accomplished, impelled an avalanche of protest from supporters of the greatly respected Massachusetts lawmaker. Godkin, who had not yet forgiven Sumner the adverse reception which his *Alabama* claims speech had met in England, joined the chorus of disapproval only with reluctance. He was willing, it appeared, to champion Sumner in his feud with Grant as long as Sumner's backers were not numerous or articulate. But when the Senator's supporters rallied in force, he hastened to neutral ground.

Godkin conceded that the dismissal of Sumner was part and parcel of a corrupt process which began when Grant fired David A. Wells at the behest of a "few barefaced monopolists" and then "drove" Cox and Hoar out of office.<sup>61</sup> "Men of character and standing and ability and culture," he mourned, had "ceased more and more to go to the White House." In their stead, "'old Romans,' like Butler and Chandler and Cameron, and sages like Wendell Phillips [have] continued to put themselves forward more and more prominently as the exponents of the President's wishes. . . ."<sup>62</sup>

But Godkin believed that the tumult over the ouster of Sumner was wholly uncalled for. Citing the impeachment trial of President Johnson as an example of the "frantic absurdity" to which some Republicans would go — he did not add that at one stage of that feud *he* had been party to talk of impeachment — he urged that the "present crisis" be taken more calmly. To this end he urged two considerations. First, the use by Grant of pressure on Congress to force the removal of Sumner was not an unheard of abuse of power. Such pressure had for years "been one of the most objectionable and notorious phenomena of Congressional life." Second, Sumner's loss of the chairmanship was not a national calamity. While the scholarly New Englander was probably "the fittest man in the Senate" for the job, he nevertheless lacked important qualifications for it. In brief, Sumner might with propriety have resigned when "he found himself arrayed in open and bitter hostility" to the President. Explained Godkin:

The main business of the Chairman of the Senate Committee is not to negotiate treaties, but to *discuss* with the Executive such treaties as have been negotiated, and receive from it explanations about them. His first business, therefore, is to be a good organ of communication on this particular class of subjects between the President and the Senate, and nobody can be said to be well fitted for this duty whose personal relations with the President are of an unpleasant nature.<sup>63</sup>

This interpretation of the duties of the chairman, it will be seen, was not quite the same as the one Godkin had given out on December 29, 1870, three months before. At that time, after Sumner's bitterly denunciatory (of Grant) speech of December 21 had brought demands for his removal, Godkin defended him as follows: "The duty of the Chairman of the [Foreign Relations] Committee is to *examine* the President's projects in all that relates to foreign affairs, and hostility to the President is a disqualification for it only when it becomes factious, which can hardly be affirmed of Mr. Sumner's hostility yet." It would be a singular step, Godkin added, to drive a well-qualified man

from his post simply "as a penalty for disrespectful language to the President."<sup>64</sup>

Meanwhile, the commission of investigation which had gone to Santo Domingo in January, 1871, had returned and was drawing up a report favorable to annexation. But senatorial opponents of the project were not inactive. Charles Sumner, although shorn of his powerful chairmanship, kept up an effective drum-fire of opposition from his seat in the Senate. When, in April, President Grant transmitted the committee's report to Congress, it was merely with the recommendation that it be published so that the people of the country might be informed as to the merits of the case. With the whole policy of annexation now discredited, the Santo Domingo project was dead. Grant never revived it. But Godkin did.

In January, 1873, Godkin fastened his editorial sights on what appeared to him to be a new Santo Domingo annexation scheme. An eastern syndicate had secured from the Baez government a ninety-nine year lease on the bay and peninsula of Samaná. Godkin suspected that this was the same group of "speculators" that according to him had been behind the original Santo Domingo project. The syndicate, it seems, had been given "sovereign powers" in the island republic. "The next thing," declared Godkin, "will of course be . . . to get the United States Government in some manner involved in the affair, so as to compel it to take possession of the Dominican Republic."<sup>65</sup>

How was this to be done? It would be accomplished, said Godkin, in two ways: (1) by working on American national pride, (2) by appealing to the cupidity of Congressmen. He proffered a blueprint of how in his opinion the scheme would operate. Because of its pungency and delightful irony, it is reproduced here almost in its entirety:

The public will be treated to glowing accounts of the operations of the company — the enormous profits it is making, and the great work it is doing for civilization, and the wonderful benefits it is conferring on "the African race"; stock will be "assigned" to members of Congress, or "placed where it will do most good," in

order to "induce them to look into the thing"; a powerful "Dominican lobby" will be established in Washington, with fine rooms and a good supply of Champagne; "facts" will be supplied to the Washington correspondents by "intelligent Dominicans" to be "worked up" for their respective journals; a large corps of lady writers will be sent down to sit under the palms and wander along the banks of "the ever-flowing streams," and take rides among "the grand old mountains" on mules supplied by the company, and will, under the influence of the flowers and warm weather, commemorate their impressions in gushing letters to the weekly papers. . . . New reasons for annexation will every day make their appearance. "Commerce," we shall be told, "demands it; manufactures demand it; the army and navy demand it; posterity looks for it . . . art, science, and literature will be the better for it; the prairie breezes sigh for it; the lonely loon of the Northern lakes cries for it. In the name of our common humanity, then, open the door to this dusky daughter of the sun-kissed seas, and let her take her seat in her golden robes among her frost-crowned sisters of the continent."<sup>66</sup>

How would such an annexation affect the American people? The bill that they would pick up for the company's concessions would be "past counting." "It is already almost impossible to gainsay a great corporation, and the greatest we have yet seen is but a pigmy to what this Samaná Bay Company may become." Moreover, with the Dominican Republic once absorbed, the annexation of Haiti would soon follow. And, since precedent would require their admission as states in the Union, Americans would be treated to the spectacle of a carpetbagger regime comparable in corruption to that of the South and the "wildcat states" of the west.

How could schemes like the Santo Domingo one be defeated? Only "by watchfulness and by reform," replied Godkin. The country was rapidly approaching a showdown on the question of whether "virtue or money" was to have final control of the government. Americans must be remorseless in their determination to "get rid of rogues and put down schemes."<sup>67</sup>



The fears of Godkin, or at least the exaggerated expression which he gave to them, proved to be groundless. The company in question held Samaná Bay until the next year (1874), at which time its concession lapsed.<sup>68</sup>

## V

In 1868 an important milestone in United States relations with the Far East was reached with the signing of the convention with China familiarly known as the Burlingame Treaty. Since the fabulous decade of the clipper ships after the signing of the Treaty of Wanghia in 1844, during which American traders sought to wrest control of the China trade from the London market, interest in the Far East had lagged. But the demands after 1865 of a rapidly expanding American economy helped to change this. China with her coolie millions was no longer to be viewed by American *entrepreneurs* as merely a source of raw materials and a potential market for American manufactures. With such a vast untapped reservoir of human labor but an ocean away, it was not strange that the demands of the western railroads and others for cheap labor were heard in Washington.

Comparatively unimportant as a commercial treaty — United States trade with China was destined to remain relatively small well into the following century — the Burlingame Treaty was notable chiefly for its “cheap labor” provisions. By reason of its clause permitting the wholesale importation, through unrestricted immigration, of Chinese contract labor the treaty (1) helped to speed the post Civil War industrial development of the United States (2) administered a powerful setback to the organization of labor, and (3) raised anew the spectre of the “yellow peril” in the form of a threatened Oriental inundation of the country.<sup>69</sup>

Godkin seldom registered unqualified approval of anything on the contemporary American scene. But he came close to doing so in commenting editorially on the successful completion of the Burlingame mission. At the same time, he grossly exaggerated its significance. Writing in the *Nation*, February 27, 1868, he declared:

The opening of China to the outside world after thirty centuries of seclusion is an event of which the importance, no matter from what point of view we consider it, can hardly be over-rated. It is in some respects equivalent to the discovery of a new continent; and that the empire should, on its entry into the family of civilized nations, adopt the United States as its friend and protector, is perhaps as high a compliment as any country has ever received.<sup>70</sup>

Godkin, like most of his compatriots, was taken in by Burlingame's showmanship and flights of eloquence. The editor foresaw, as a consequence of the Burlingame Treaty, a great expansion of United States trade with China. Either San Francisco or New York, he predicted, would ultimately replace London as the great Western *entrepot* for the Far Eastern Trade. Yet characteristically he warned at the same time against undue optimism. China, he pointed out, was a backward country. While there was doubtless much that Americans could learn from the Chinese in the way of "grace and manners," it should be remembered that "our civilization is the best there ever has been — the best morally, mentally, and materially — and is not likely to gain much by the opening up of the Oriental world."<sup>71</sup>

But whatever misgivings the commercially inclined Godkin had about the Chinese civilization were outweighed in his estimation by the rich opportunities the treaty afforded for American exploitation of Chinese labor. The Chinese, he noted with satisfaction in 1869, "will work harder and for less wages and are more tractable" than the Irish and Germans.<sup>72</sup> He predicted that, as a result of the Burlingame Treaty, Chinese would be "drawn" to the United States during the next fifty years in much greater numbers than Europeans.

The captious publicist was singularly inattentive to the plea that the wholesale importation of cheap labor would debase American working standards. In this connection he was especially censorious of the Irish-Americans, whom he held responsible for most of the outrages against Chinese workers. Likewise, California justice came in for its share of censure for its discrimination against the yellow man. "Californians," as Godkin remarked in

July, 1869, "seem to be almost as sensitive of this feature of their jurisprudence as our Southern friends used to be to criticism of the slave code."<sup>73</sup>

If working class hostility were all that was required to keep the Chinese out, Godkin conceded, they should be banned. But there were, he argued, other and more "practical" considerations than those of the "popular prejudice." Chief of these was the irresistible "demand of capital for labor." The tremendous post war development of the United States had created unparalleled opportunities for European investment capital. "Add to this the very large body of capital which is already accumulated here . . . and eagerly seeking investment through the shrewdest and most indomitable speculators the world has ever seen, and you have a demand for labor which nothing can resist."<sup>74</sup>

Another factor favoring unrestricted Chinese "immigration," according to Godkin, was the demand of the public for cheap domestic service. Part of this demand, he indicated, came from the farmer. The editor contrasted the discontented American farmer with what he termed his "happy and contented" European counterpart. European farmers were *peasants* — "that is persons without knowledge or ambition or tastes, with few desires above those of the ox in their plough." Similarly, the wife of the European peasant was a "robust animal" who thoroughly enjoyed her domestic labors "without a suspicion that she [was] capable of anything higher or better." The curse of the American farmer, explained Godkin, was that he was equipped with finer sensibilities but without the means of indulging them. He was endeavoring, with ill success, "to live while laboring with his hands, as only superintendents of labor live in other countries." Unless he could get "cheap and reliable labor," he was destined ultimately to revert to "what he has always been since Adam's fall, the rude, unlettered peasant."<sup>75</sup>

The same story of hardship could be told, declared Godkin, of the large class of American city dwellers who could not at present afford a servant, or who "endure the untold and unutterable agony of trying to get intelligent assistance out of one." Like the farmer, city dwellers saw promise of a solution to their problem in the Burlingame Treaty. Both classes would "go

through fire and water" to get the Chinese, who were described as "submissive, tractable, painstaking, economical, cheap, needing neither society, nor amusements, nor church, nor school; neither saucy, nor ambitious, nor restless."<sup>76</sup>

When put on the defensive, Godkin conceded that the "American social ideal" would suffer from the mass influx of people "whose value lies in their fitness for servile duties and in their want of social ambition." But he believed that the pressing need for cheap labor outweighed this disadvantage. The very survival of civilization was, according to him, at stake in the servant question. "Marriage, divorce, child bearing, female health, the permanence and purity of homes, are all affected by it." Furthermore, the American social ideal had already been rudely jolted by the advent of modern industry, and the country could not, if it would, go back to the time "when the mill girls wrote poetry and read French, and the farmer's hired man could deliver a Fourth of July oration on a pinch."<sup>77</sup>

But at the same time Godkin contemptuously scouted the popular belief that the coolie system was to be established in the United States. No matter how "long suffering and peaceable" employers proved to be, declared he in 1870, there would always be plenty of professional do-gooders "egging on the Chinamen to make their masters uncomfortable in innumerable ways."<sup>78</sup> He was confident, he said, that "practical" Americans, "those who consider the facts of American life apart from the theories of American progress preached on platforms," shared his views.<sup>79</sup>

The versatile Godkin in his fertile imagination foresaw a probable left-handed political boon in the Chinese invasion. The United States, he believed, was too democratic. It was attempting "to conduct the complex affairs of a great nation on the model of the town-meeting."<sup>80</sup> By giving the ballot to everybody regardless of qualification, it was permitting "ignorant foreigners" to do a great deal of political mischief. This was the situation as the editor found it in 1866;

In all our large towns a swarm of foreigners have alighted, ignorant, credulous, newly emancipated, bru-

talized by oppression, and bred in the habit of regarding the law as their enemy, the rich as their tyrants and a longed-for but unattainable prey. They are welcomed for the sake of their labor and are almost at once admitted to a share in the government.<sup>81</sup>

How could the Chinese invasion help correct this situation? Godkin replied that it might, by hopelessly enlarging the dimensions of the problem, serve to force the hand of advocates of universal suffrage who were currently blocking the road to "electoral reform."<sup>82</sup>

In July, 1870, the first Chinese contract laborers arrived in Massachusetts. Uneasily contemplating the public dismay which had greeted the event, Godkin now was willing to concede that it may have been unwise for the country to rush so precipitately into the Burlingame Treaty. But, as usual, he had no remedy to offer. "It is too late," he observed with characteristic irony in the *Nation*, "to have the Mongolian blood analysed, and the low condition of Chinese morals exposed." So what if the Chinese did pour in and "undersell our laborers by their low standard of living, and debauch our politics by their ignorance and immorality?" There was nothing that could be done about it. The country had already gone too far in entrusting such things to Providence "to go back now and attempt to construct protective machinery."<sup>83</sup>

Popular writers and some historians tend to depict Godkin as a crusading reformer.<sup>84</sup> Godkin himself rejected the label. In pursuance of his announced role of publicist-critic, some of his severest strictures were directed against reformers as a class. One of the most reactionary editorials he wrote on the subject of Chinese immigration took the form of an attack on Wendell Phillips in September, 1870. In the editorial he spared few unflattering adjectives in commenting on the reforming activities of the former Abolitionist and *Nation* stockholder.<sup>85</sup> Of Phillips' advocacy of the eight hour day and other social reforms, he wrote:

And this pernicious nonsense is uttered in the presence and hearing of thousands of ignorant laborers all over



the country, who are thirsting for a life without toil, and whose efforts in pursuit of it are disorganizing nearly every branch of industry, are marked by every variety of crime and outrage, and are exercising a markedly deteriorating influence on the arts."<sup>86</sup>

But the focus of Godkin's complaint against Phillips was the New Englander's opposition to the importation of Chinese contract labor. He charged that Phillips "after first announcing in ringing humanitarian terms that the United States would be all the better for welcoming men of every creed and color to her shores, gave his horrified Irish supporters the wink and produced the qualification." The qualification being "that the more Chinamen came among us the better, provided they come 'spontaneously' — that is . . . did not have their passage paid by a capitalist."

The joker in Phillips' statement, Godkin pointed out, was that if the contract were prohibited, "the capitalist will 'import' no Chinamen, and therefore no Chinamen will come, and the labor reformers and their chief will have the credit of being first-class humanitarians and spread-eagle democrats and at the same time keep the labor-market to themselves."<sup>87</sup>

Interestingly enough, the traffic in Chinese laborers (few women or children came) which Godkin so ardently defended was technically an evasion of the Burlingame Treaty. Had the strict terms of the fifth article of that agreement, "reprobating" involuntary immigration, been carried out, there would probably have been no mass movement of Chinese to the United States. But greedy employers had to be served, and foreign labor contractors in alliance with unscrupulous native officials were not particular as to their methods of supply. United States minister to China George F. Seward pointed up the problem when he informed Secretary of State Evarts in March, 1879, that

As the law now stands no Chinese can land in this country who has not proven before the consul of the United States at the port of departure, that he is a voluntary immigrant. But this law is a dead letter.

Nearly all immigrants come from Hong Kong, and the Consul at that port is not provided with a sufficient staff of officers to enable him to make the required examination.<sup>88</sup>

## VI

On September 18, 1873, the highly regarded Eastern banking firm of Jay Cooke and Company closed its doors. This event touched off a financial panic which brought to an end the boom inspired by the Civil War; the country fell into a depression from which it was not to recover for six years. But on November 20, 1873, Godkin reported in the *Nation* that the panic was subsiding. The winter, he observed, promised to be so dull that the newspapers were casting about for some sensation to relieve it. Even Congress, faced with six months of "dull financial discussions," was prepared to welcome excitement in the form of a foreign squabble.<sup>89</sup>

Godkin was not venturing a prediction; he was seeking to account for the fact that since the third week of November the country had been in an abnormal state of excitement over the *Virginius* affair with Spain. The *Virginius* was a seagoing vessel built in the United States but owned, as was later established, by Cuban revolutionaries and illegally flying the American flag. For several years this vessel had been openly running military supplies from the United States to the insurrectionists in Cuba. On October 31, 1873, while transporting a shipload of men and munitions to that unhappy island, she was captured on the high seas by a Spanish man-of-war and taken to Santiago; a summary court-martial was convened, and fifty-three crewmen, Britons as well as Americans among them, were executed.

The American public was deeply stirred by what appeared to it to be a wanton display of Spanish cruelty, accompanied by a studied insult to the United States flag. President Grant, through Secretary Fish, made strong representations to the Spanish government, backed by a thinly veiled threat of hostilities in the event of non-compliance.<sup>90</sup> While angry Spaniards demonstrated outside the United States embassy in Madrid, such

widely read New York newspapers as the *Sun* and the *Tribune* called for immediate retaliatory measures against Spain, and mass protest meetings were held in several eastern American cities.<sup>91</sup> With patriotic temperatures mounting daily, a worried Godkin dedicated three pages of the November 20 issue of the *Nation* to helping to calm his overheated countrymen.

The *Nation* did not deny that American wrath against Spain was partly justified. It conceded that the trial and executions of the crew of the *Virginius* appeared to have been handled "without even the show of decorum that accompanies the ordinary drumhead court-martial," and it agreed that the United States was justified in demanding an apology and punishment for the local officials involved.<sup>92</sup> But Godkin had not taken up his pen for the purpose of entering the lists against the harassed Dons. The *Virginius* affair, he wrote, was made-to-order for American troublemakers. "Many editors consider it a sort of patriotic duty to lose their heads whenever they are called on to discuss any matter which appears to involve the honor of the national flag . . . ." Likewise, public men found it politically expedient to "take the extreme anti-foreign view," no matter what the "state of the facts or the bearing of the law."<sup>93</sup> Moreover, there were a great many financiers "who, while they are half ashamed to ask for expansion in order to help them out of their own difficulties, would have no hesitation in asking for it to help to 'vindicate the national honor.' "<sup>94</sup>

The plea of Godkin for calm deliberation was based chiefly on the contention that the Spaniards were within their legal rights in seizing the *Virginius*. The *Nation* editorially conceded that it was contrary to international law to seize a vessel on the high seas when no officially declared state of war existed, as was the case in Cuba. But such a rule, maintained Godkin and his associates, existed "solely in the interests of trade, and of trade carried on by neutral merchants."<sup>95</sup> In the case of the *Virginius*, "the element of trade, of buying contraband and shipping it in a neutral bottom, with a design of selling it to one of the hostile parties" was entirely lacking.<sup>96</sup> Godkin urged his readers to see the Spanish side of the dispute. He reminded

them that the *Virginus* was an old offender whose latest voyage to Cuba had been well publicized. To further provoke the Spaniards, it seems, a "fine batch of insurrectionary leaders" had been aboard. The officials at Santiago had reacted simply as Spaniards, barbarized and debauched by generations of civil and religious tyranny, would be expected to act.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, Spain was rent at home by political and military strife and its government risked being overthrown if it attempted to comply with United States demands.

It was inevitable that Godkin's racial pride should manifest itself in the crisis.<sup>98</sup> He found it incomprehensible that such an "inferior" people as the Cubans should be the special object of United States sympathy. The tenor of his comment was as follows: The Cuban rebels, despite the frequency with which they were fêted at popular indignation meetings in the United States, were equally as barbarous as their Spanish overlords, indeed the cruelty of the Cubans was simply the cruelty of people of Spanish extraction everywhere. Thus, whenever American orators talked glibly of annexing Cuba, they literally meant "the admission to a share in this government of a motley million and a half of Spaniards, Cubans and Negroes, to whom our religion, manners, political traditions and habits, and modes of thought are, to tell the honest truth, about as familiar as they are to the King of Dahomey."<sup>99</sup>

The next week, November 27, the *Nation* was even more emphatic in its opposition to making an issue of the *Virginus*. Reminding its readers that Cuban belligerency had not been recognized by other nations, it pointed out that the activities of the *Virginus* were "technically piratical." Moreover, the fraudulent use of American registry by the vessel was an "outrage on the neutral" which might subject the United States to "severe reclamations" from the parent state (Spain). This was "the very doctrine maintained by the United States in the *Alabama* controversy and triumphantly enforced in the Treaty of Washington and by the Geneva Arbitration."<sup>100</sup>

A week passed. Calmer counsels like Godkin's prevailed. There was no real desire for war. The demands of Secretary Fish were modified; the Spanish government, in turn, showed

itself to be more tractable than expected. The newspapers having failed to live up to the worst expectations of Godkin, excitement over the *Virginius* affair subsided. On December 4, 1873, the editor was able to report in the *Nation* a virtual settlement.

Godkin approved the plan, which he stated had been agreed upon, to ask a mixed tribunal to determine the status of the *Virginius*, but he added a characteristic note of pessimistic qualification when he warned that the arrangement involved new hazards. He pointed out that if the tribunal should determine that the *Virginius* was an American vessel the United States would be answerable to the Spanish for her activities prior to her capture. If, in other words, it were shown that the United States had permitted one of its own vessels to operate as a "notorious filibusterer," the Spaniards "could make some very unpleasant demands on us, which we shall find it very difficult, under the Geneva rulings, to gainsay." But, in general, Godkin thought the settlement a rather good one. Secretary Fish, said he, could "consider it another feather in his cap."<sup>101</sup>

Having dispensed these brief introductory pleasantries, Godkin turned to his sermon for the day. Briefly, it ran as follows: There were some aspects of the *Virginius* episode which did not bear up well under scrutiny. Throughout the controversy the government of the United States had been "playing a very dangerous game." A country that was not prepared to fight ought not to say provocative things to another, no matter what the state of popular indignation. Yet the United States had "made peremptory demands for satisfaction for an insult on a nation by no means blessed with wisdom and just now in a very wild and irritable frame of mind, and have allowed a few days only for their consideration, and have backed them by an open threat of war in case of non-compliance by a certain day."<sup>102</sup>

Godkin on this occasion could see no parallel between the long drawn out *Alabama* controversy and the *Virginius* affair. He explained his contention as follows: During the *Alabama* negotiations it had made no difference that the United States was gradually allowing its navy to become obsolete.<sup>103</sup> There being no desire to fight England, the country had adopted the



policy of "patience and long suffering." But there was no certainty that such a policy would have borne fruit at Madrid. In this case the situation appeared to require that the Secretary of State adopt a forceful tone. It was hardly the fault of Fish that the "stupidity or indifference" of Congress and the American people had left the United States militarily unprepared to back up its demands, yet Fish had actually "been threatening to fight a maritime power of considerable force, and to wrest from it an island, upon a few weeks' notice, without having anything that can be called a navy at his command." Godkin illustrated:

The huge wooden screws which we send cruising round the world with so much pomp and pride, to protect our interests in foreign lands, and which are paraded in newspapers as terrible engines of war, are almost useless for military purposes. They belong to a class of ships which other governments have sold or are selling for firewood. In a naval action with a modern man-of-war they would be sent to the bottom in five minutes.<sup>104</sup>

So far, except for some added rhetorical embellishment, Godkin was simply repeating what was already common knowledge in American military circles.<sup>105</sup> But he did not stop there. The United States, he charged, did not have a single seagoing ironclad "fit to contend with the Spanish frigates." If war should break out tomorrow the country would be "driven immediately from the sea." He noted that a navy, unlike an army, could not be put together in a few weeks, yet the most bellicose members of Congress were the "very men who most pertinaciously resisted all national preparations for war . . . ."<sup>106</sup>

Those, said Godkin, were the hard facts. He offered the country a choice. If it was determined not to maintain a navy, it must make up its mind to be very peaceful in its demeanor, and to "bear insults and 'outrages' and 'dungeon' troubles patiently and to give up the luxury of speedy vengeance. . . ."<sup>107</sup> It was not quite clear whether Godkin was himself advocating the second of the two alternatives — a strong navy. The peace-loving

Richard Cobden, whose teachings were a significant portion of the intellectual bill of fare in the *Nation*, had supported the British navy. Yet, as will be seen, it was in Godkin that, a generation later, Alfred Thayer Mahan found one of his stoutest critics.<sup>108</sup>

# The 1880's and Business Diplomacy

The distinguishing feature of Godkin's treatment of United States foreign relations during the decade of the 1880's was the extent to which it was colored by his hatred of James G. Blaine. In March, 1881, the "Plumed Knight" became Secretary of State. Overshadowing his chief in the White House, Blaine entertained a conception of the duties of his office which heralded a new departure in American diplomacy. Bold, resourceful, and possessed of a vivid imagination, he stood out in startling contrast to his predecessors. The aims which he laid down for the foreign policy of the Garfield Administration were two: (1) hemispheric peace, (2) the cultivation, in his own words, of "such friendly, commercial relations with all American countries as would lead to a large increase in the export trade of the United States."<sup>1</sup> It was the manner in which Blaine sought to implement these aims which prompted Godkin, in a moment of special irritation, to declare:

Whenever American politicians get it into their heads with clearness that commerce goes where the market is good, and cannot be fostered by diplomatic meddling, or intrigue, or war, or high tariffs, or bounties, we shall undoubtedly get the South American business which London and Liverpool now do, but not sooner.<sup>2</sup>

The specific occasion for Godkin's blast was an interview Blaine had given to the *Washington Post* a few months after his enforced retirement from the Department of State in December, 1881. In the interview the former Secretary reportedly expressed concern over the reversal of his Peruvian policy and complained that through weak-kneed diplomacy the "opportunity of a century" for American commercial interests in Chile and Peru had been lost. Godkin was scornful of this argument. Asserting that the loss of the trade of Chile and Peru would have about as much effect on the United States economy as "the failure of a dry goods store in Bangor, Maine," he plunged into a stinging indictment of Blaine's controversial Peruvian policy.

Blaine had inherited the complicated Peruvian question from the previous Administration. Secretary of State Evarts had attempted, with ill success, to play the role of peacemaker in the War of the Pacific, a one-sided contest involving small but aggressive Chile on one side and Bolivia and Peru on the other. Beyond the routine task of safeguarding American lives and property in the war zone, Evarts' diplomacy had had two cardinal objectives: (1) to discourage a European intervention in the conflict; (2) to dissuade Chile from turning the war into one of conquest. Toward the second end one noteworthy but unsuccessful attempt at mediation was made in 1880.<sup>3</sup> At the close of Evarts' term, in the words of his biographer, "the government was committed to an attitude of friendly remonstrance with Chile against the dismemberment of Peru until Peru had been given a chance to negotiate with her creditors on terms that would enable her to offer Chile an adequate war indemnity."<sup>4</sup> The United States, then, was already officially on record as opposed to the Chilean conquest of Peru when Blaine entered the State Department in 1881. This fact should be kept in mind in attempting to assess the validity of the charges which his enemies, Godkin among them, later brought against the Secretary.

An initial obstacle to the opening of peace negotiations, aside from Chile's reticence to undertake them without a guarantee in advance of territorial concessions, was the fact that Peru was without a central government to conclude peace. To remedy this defect, and with the approval of Chile, a provisional govern-

ment was set up under Francisco Garcia Calderon. One of the first official acts of Secretary Blaine was to authorize the recognition of this quasi government.<sup>5</sup> Garcia Calderon, however, proved to be unreceptive to the conqueror's territorial demands. When the Chileans arrested him and took him prisoner to Chile, Blaine interpreted the action as a calculated affront to the United States. With anarchy setting in over Peru and the demands of the invader from the south mounting, it was clear to the Secretary that if anything like an equitable settlement was to be reached, strong measures were called for.<sup>6</sup>

To Godkin, who seemingly shared the prevailing English admiration for Chile, it was equally clear that Blaine was "meddling." The settlement of the War of the Pacific was, he believed, solely a matter between conqueror and defeated and not the slightest concern of the United States. The editor's dislike of Blaine amounted to an obsession. No study of Blaine's writings on international law, he wrote in March, 1882 — after Blaine had left the State Department — would enable anyone "to discover what are his notions of the rights and duties of a friendly neutral toward two belligerents." He pointed to the dispatch authorizing the recognition of the Garcia Calderon government as an illustration of the "absolutely novel" character of the former Secretary's diplomacy. Blaine had "laid it down" that "in order to justify a neutral in recognizing a government, it is not necessary that it should be a *de facto* government whose authority is obeyed by the population over which it claims jurisdiction; that all that is needed is that it should be a government which the neutral likes, and thinks would govern well if it got a chance."<sup>7</sup> Moreover, Blaine "treats the arrest of such a government by the conqueror, and confinement in prison as something in the nature of a *casus belli* as regards any neutral which may have recognized it."<sup>8</sup>

Chile had originally demanded the cession of Antofagasta and Tarapacá as a condition of the opening of peace talks. These demands were added to as the full extent of her triumph over Peru became known. All this was well known both to Evarts and to Blaine, despite an assertion by Godkin that Blaine had



"only guessed" at what Chile's intended demands were prior to November, 1881.<sup>9</sup> Blaine's position on them, although rendered more emphatic by his ill-concealed hostility to Chile, was precisely the same as that of his predecessor. It was that, although territorial concessions might be a legitimate subject for consideration at the peace table, they ought not to be made a precondition of the negotiations (or as Godkin scornfully put it, Blaine had "laid it down" that "though a conqueror may exact the cession of territory as the result of his conquest, yet he ought not to do so unless he has asked for and failed to receive a cash indemnity . . . ." <sup>10</sup>) The censorious editor tersely summed up his opinion of the argument — the authorship of which he attributed to Blaine — as follows:

We need hardly say that this rubbish — for rubbish it is, being all but incomprehensible — originated in Mr. Blaine's brain. Nothing of the kind can be found in any text-book, or in the history of any war. The right of conquest exists in virtue of the fact of conquest, and the conqueror takes his indemnity in any form he pleases. Of course Chili [*sic*] paid no attention to these absurd utterances.<sup>11</sup>

This attack was hardly fair. The real author of these "absurd utterances" was Evarts. Yet, ironically, Godkin included Evarts in his calendar of great American Secretaries of State.

## II

The controversy with Chile was going full tilt when in December, 1881, Frederick T. Frelinghuysen supplanted Blaine as Secretary of State. Frelinghuysen was a wealthy and conservative New Jersey corporation lawyer whose fitness for the office derived chiefly from his reputed legal talents.<sup>12</sup> Politically he was a Stalwart Republican, an allegiance not calculated to endear him to reformers. The fact that he totally lacked the imagination and aggressiveness of Blaine was held to be a major asset.<sup>13</sup> The *Nation* probably reflected the con-

servative reformist temper accurately when it indicated, to use Professor Philip M. Brown's paraphrase, that "Mr. Frelinghuysen was a public man of large experience and a conservative spirit, likely to take us safely through the muddles in which we have recently been involved."<sup>14</sup>

As Secretary, Frelinghuysen set to work with a vengeance to undo several of the policies of his predecessor. The first to be discarded was the official attitude of opposition to Chile's territorial demands on Peru. Godkin seemed satisfied that the country had thereby been saved from war.<sup>15</sup> But in the extremes to which the new Secretary went to placate Chile, he undid not only the vigorous diplomacy of Blaine but most of the patient and impartial efforts of Evarts as well. For this Frelinghuysen must bear a major share of the guilt for the legacy of hate which the settlement of the War of the Pacific bequeathed to the modern world.

While Frelinghuysen was thus occupied, the controversial Peruvian policy of his predecessor was becoming a topic of warm discussion in the press. Charges and counter-charges were being hurled with little regard for accuracy. In the spring of 1882 the House Committee on Foreign Affairs took cognizance of the public clamor by launching an investigation of Blaine's South American diplomacy. Secretary Frelinghuysen freely cooperated by supplying the committee in voluminous detail with the official correspondence relating to the former Secretary's handling of the War of the Pacific.<sup>16</sup> The investigation itself proved inconclusive, although officially Blaine was exonerated.

A highlight of the hearings was the appearance of Blaine before the committee and his cross-examination by a youthful legislator named Perry Belmont. It was the contention of Belmont that Blaine, as Godkin put it, "had used the Landreau Claim to force a difficulty between the United States and Chili by making demands which notoriously could not be complied with, and that a certain passage in one of Mr. Blaine's despatches would bear out such a construction if rightly interpreted."<sup>17</sup> Under Belmont's relentless probing the patience of Blaine eventually wore thin and an unseemly altercation took place. Godkin cited Blaine's burst of anger as evidence that Belmont

had struck home, in other words that Belmont "in his construction of the meaning of the despatch, was substantially right." The presumption of guilt on Blaine's part was reinforced, the editor asserted, by the fact that during the cross-examination Blaine was "on so many sides of every question that he authorizes us to use our discretion in judging where he really was."<sup>18</sup>

What was the Landreau claim mentioned by Godkin which figured so prominently in the investigation? It was an old claim involving rights to sizeable guano and nitrate deposits in Peru granted to one Landreau, a Frenchman by birth who claimed American citizenship. Blaine was not the first Secretary of State to take notice of the claim; both Fish and Evarts had shown some interest in it. It was Blaine seemingly who had conscripted it to serve a policy.<sup>19</sup>

What had the Landreau claim to do with Blaine's policy toward the War of the Pacific? This, in one sentence, was Godkin's answer:

Simply this, that these strange interferences in the quarrel, and the strong demands and queer concoctions of international law, were accompanied all along by warnings that no treaty of peace must be concluded which did not provide for an investigation before some Peruvian tribunal, or recognition by the Chilians, of the Landreau claim — a claim of obscure origin and doubtful validity, held by a person whose American citizenship was not clear, and which our Government had already refused to treat as worthy of its official support, the amount of which was enormous, and which, if a good claim, would of course continue to be as good against any Power which took possession of Peru as against Peru herself.<sup>20</sup>

When one read the whole "fantastic" story, commented Godkin, "and remembers that from the first of July last to December it was in the power of the Secretary . . . to plunge the country into war with one or two foreign powers, and cause a business panic of the first magnitude, one can hardly avoid a shiver of mingled amazement and relief."<sup>21</sup> Why had Blaine gone to such

lengths to support the Landreau claim? In answering this Godkin carefully skirted the laws of libel. It seemed that a "great many" suspected Blaine of having a personal interest in the claim. This was a natural assumption to draw, Godkin indicated, in view of the "revelations" contained in the Mulligan letters.<sup>22</sup>

### III

The 1880's witnessed a large-scale revival of interest in interoceanic canal projects. The major focus of attention was on Central America, specifically the Isthmus of Panama. There the uneasy equilibrium which had for some years existed between the governments of the United States and Great Britain was being rudely tilted. The Clayton-Bulwer treaty, signed in 1850 and still in force in 1880, had provided for a sort of joint protectorate by the two countries over any canal which might be dug across the isthmus by way of the San Juan river. The treaty was never popular in the United States, and, as the century waned, public opinion began to crystallize in favor of an exclusively American canal.<sup>23</sup>

This American attitude was given a spur from a somewhat unexpected quarter in 1879 when word leaked out of the plans of a French company formed by Ferdinand de Lesseps to dig a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. The news evoked almost instantaneous expressions of alarm in the United States. An avalanche of resolutions opposing the project descended on Congress. Senator Burnside of Rhode Island keynoted the popular feeling when, in a flamboyant speech before the United States Senate in December, 1879, he declared that the people of the United States were determined to uphold the Monroe Doctrine and "would never tolerate . . . the construction of an interoceanic canal with European capital."<sup>24</sup> Even Godkin and his associates on the *Nation* dropped their pose of "sober" sophistication long enough excitedly to warn on February 5, 1880:

. . . the canal is of vital importance to us as a commercial link between the two coasts of our continent . . . both [France and England] are granted powers on the Isthmus the exercise of which may prove some day danger-

ous to this country . . . . It is now time to "seize the day," as Senator Bayard said, and act "positively and efficaciously," to the end that neither France nor any other power shall acquire a dangerous foothold at our doors.<sup>25</sup>

"We cannot and ought not to stop the building of a canal," the *Nation* added as an important qualification, "but we must protect ourselves against some of the possible results of the control of the canal by a French company in Colombia." To this end Godkin, or one of his subordinates, writing in "The Week," advised the strengthening of the Navy.<sup>26</sup> This was in keeping with a *Nation* proposal of the previous year for "the creation and maintenance of a naval force in the Atlantic and Pacific capable of contending with that of any possible European combination."<sup>27</sup> Moreover, "The Week" applauded when, on March 8, 1880, President Hayes made the following declaration in a special message to Congress:

The policy of this country is a canal under American control. The United States cannot consent to the surrender of this control to any European power or to any combination of European powers. If existing treaties between the United States and other nations or if the rights of sovereignty or property of other nations stand in the way of this policy . . . suitable steps should be taken by just and liberal negotiations to promote and establish the American policy on this subject . . . .<sup>28</sup>

This, with some deviation,<sup>29</sup> was where the *Nation* stood on the canal matter when the new Garfield Administration took office in March, 1881. President Garfield used the occasion of his inaugural address to reaffirm the sentiments expressed by his predecessor. The following month, the House Foreign Affairs Committee reported favorably on a resolution calling upon the President to take immediate steps to abrogate the Clayton-Bulwer treaty on the grounds that it violated the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>30</sup>

For once, it would seem, the popular side could count on the *Nation* for support. But with Blaine now in the State De-



partment all of Godkin's instinctive perversity came rushing to the fore. A leader paragraph in "The Week" on April 22, 1881, marked out what was, in effect, a brand new *Nation* policy toward canal projects in general. Its author conceded that the Clayton-Bulwer treaty "has never done much good to any one, and its abrogation will do no harm." But he strongly disapproved of the introduction of the Monroe Doctrine into the argument. As the *Nation* now saw it, the "commercial nations of the world" were justified in complaining that the Monroe Doctrine "as at present interpreted seems to consist in warning everybody off who threatens to make a highway for the commerce of the world, and at the same time doing nothing about it ourselves."<sup>31</sup>

In the spring of 1882 the official correspondence over the Isthmian question was made public. Blaine had meanwhile been succeeded in the State Department by Frelinghuysen, who was continuing with ill success the discussions with England his predecessor had begun over the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. Up to this point Godkin had been forced to confine his attacks on Blaine to the former Secretary's South American policy; now he bitterly assailed his Isthmian diplomacy as well. In June his attention was drawn to a New York *Tribune* editorial which, by the use of the parallel quotation device, had sought to defend Blaine by showing that Frelinghuysen was merely copying his arguments against the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. Godkin, who for the moment held Frelinghuysen in high regard, disagreed. In the first place, asserted he, "nobody ever said" Blaine was wrong in attacking the Clayton-Bulwer treaty.<sup>32</sup> Continuing his rebuttal to the *Tribune* by reviewing the history of the year-old controversy, he was determined that his readers should not forget that Blaine had omitted mention of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty in his now famous circular letter to the European powers, June 24, 1881.<sup>33</sup> Godkin characterized the omission as a "child like expedient" which had depended for its success on "the chance that the British Foreign Office had forgotten its existence." He was intent upon making it appear that Lord Granville's production of the treaty three months later had come as a rude shock to Blaine — this despite the fact that the published documents in Godkin's pos-

session showed that Blaine had discussed the treaty in a communication to Granville, written *prior* to his receipt of the Foreign Secretary's reply to the circular.

The documents reproduced by the *Tribune* showed that Blaine's discussions with Lord Granville had been conducted upon a much higher plane than extreme critics of the former Secretary — such as Godkin — had heretofore allowed. Faced with this irrefutable evidence, Godkin refused to retreat.<sup>34</sup> On December 7, 1882, his version was as follows: After Lord Granville had reminded Blaine in a "cutting" way of the existence of the treaty, the former Secretary of State took it up and called for its modification, "pouring over the subject a flood of the lurid campaign rhetoric which has made his state papers so famous over the entire earth."<sup>35</sup>

It was the controversial circular that had precipitated the correspondence which consistently drew Godkin's heaviest censure. For several years he continued periodically to supply his readers with his own version of what was in it. By December, 1882, he was ready to concede that Blaine may have "forgot all about" the Clayton-Bulwer treaty when he wrote that "terrible circular to the European powers." Christmas of 1884 found him still berating Blaine for his "insolent and threatening" circular, in which, "either through ignorance or forgetfulness," he failed to mention the Clayton-Bulwer treaty and "was neatly 'shut up' by a slightly sarcastic answer from Lord Granville."<sup>36</sup>

#### IV

Secretary Frelinghuysen's ultimate defeat in the war of words begun by Blaine with England over the Clayton-Bulwer treaty did not dampen the ardor of Administration enthusiasts for an American-controlled canal. Convinced that the United States would never gain full control of de Lesseps' projected Isthmian link, President Arthur fixed on Nicaragua as the site for a second canal, and in furtherance of this objective, in direct disregard of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, Frelinghuysen concluded a treaty with Nicaragua in 1884.<sup>37</sup>

In contrast to the one-sided treatment he had accorded to the shirtsleeve Isthmian diplomacy of Blaine, Godkin regarded the abortive Frelinghuysen-Zavala agreement calmly and, at first, almost favorably. His first editorial on the subject, December 18, 1884, conceded the strength of the American case against the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. "No people," the unpredictable editor declared, "is bound to let the provisions of a treaty stand for one hour in the way of whatever its safety, honor, or welfare may seem to require."<sup>38</sup> Interestingly, nearly all the arguments which he advanced in favor of renouncing the treaty with England had been used by Blaine three years before, while a chief argument produced by Frelinghuysen, that the treaty contravened the Monroe Doctrine, he discarded. His point of view on this occasion was substantially that which has since been presented by Professor Dexter Perkins.<sup>39</sup> Godkin wrote:

The Clayton-Bulwer treaty . . . simply added Great Britain's guarantee of the neutrality of any canal which might be constructed across the Isthmus to the guarantee of the United States. In other words, Great Britain in that treaty *entered into the very stipulations with regard to the Isthmus which the United States would have had to impose on her as the result of a successful war waged in defense of the Monroe Doctrine.*<sup>40</sup>

Eventually, in the same editorial, Godkin got around to indicating his objections to the Nicaraguan treaty. It might be "smart" diplomacy, he commented, to get rid of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty simply by the device of concluding another with Nicaragua, but morally it would not redound to the credit of the country "which is just undertaking the protectorate of the whole continent." He favored the idea that England, if approached in a friendly way, would welcome a release from her commitments under the treaty and would readily "concede everything asked for."<sup>41</sup> The next week Godkin was emphatic in his opposition to the Frelinghuysen-Zavala treaty. "Nobody has been threatening to construct a Nicaraguan canal. We can make it this year or in five years, as best suits our convenience."<sup>42</sup>

Aside from the question of the morality of the Nicaraguan treaty, which, strangely, Godkin did not especially emphasize, his main objection to the treaty was at first territorial. He feared American speculators would use it as the entering wedge for the addition of three or four new states, "containing more 'rum, Romanism, and rebellion' to the square mile than probably any other part of the world."<sup>43</sup> The treaty, he stated on December 18, 1884, would invest the United States with full sovereignty over a six-mile-wide strip of Nicaraguan territory.<sup>44</sup> Informed of his error, he turned it to quick advantage the following week by pointing to an exactly opposite danger. He was relieved, he announced, to hear that the treaty safeguarded the independence of Nicaragua, but, at the same time, was it not unrealistic to assume that "Nicaraguan protection will be sufficient for the canal?"<sup>45</sup>

There was enough sense in what Godkin was saying that it would be unfair, perhaps, to accuse him of seeking deliberately to confuse the issue. Yet the fact of the matter appeared to be that he was now opposed to an American-controlled canal on any terms but found it impolitic to say so. This became increasingly evident as the days went by. Once, referring to the fact that the Nicaraguan treaty had been put forward in the waning days of the Arthur Administration, he accused the President of "sinning along the same lines as James G. Blaine" by "trying privately and almost secretly to create burdens which he will himself escape carrying." The country, Godkin declared, "has not elected Mr. Cleveland simply to carry out a batch of treaties creating very important changes in our revenue and in our foreign relations, and committing us to the construction of a vast public work thousands of miles away, framed by the Republican Administration in its very last days."<sup>46</sup> Yet at the same time the editor disclaimed any intent to pass on the merits of the treaties themselves.

Enough United States Senators signified their opposition to the Frelinghuysen-Zavala treaty so that by early February, 1885, its defeat was assured. On February 5, Godkin offered some preliminary post-mortems in the form of advice on how to

take "a calm and rational view on canals" in the future. The country, he admonished, needed to get over the "quaint delusion" that to have an interoceanic canal it must own and control it itself. What he now thought would be best for the United States was a neutralized canal under international guarantee.<sup>47</sup>

Experience taught that in the absence of a general declaration of neutrality by the Powers—Godkin pointed to the French-built Suez canal as an example—control of an interoceanic canal would ultimately be held, not by the nation which constructed it, but by the one which made the most use of it and had the strongest navy. Here again, Godkin (but from decidedly different motives) anticipated Mahan. It was a "patent truth," he wrote, that "any interoceanic waterway inevitably falls into the hands of the Power whose maritime force enables it to hold the sea at each entrance." Had any attempt been made to put the United States navy on any such footing? Of course not; even Chile had a stronger navy. Indeed, "the probability of war with England is one of the strongest arguments in favor of our not making and owning the canal."<sup>48</sup> "Let us suppose," Godkin added by way of illustration, that war "has broken out, and we begin sending troops and ships to the Pacific Coast, through the canal, as per programme."

When they arrive off Greytown, in wooden transports, convoyed by big wooden frigates, they will find a squadron of British ironclads, which will probably, from motives of humanity, not sink them, but warn them off. Astonished at this, the American Commodore will go on board the British flag-ship to know what it means. "It means war," the British admiral will answer. "You cannot enter the canal. I have closed it." "But the canal is ours," the American will say. "It was built with our money and under treaty with Nicaragua; we have a two-thirds interest in it, and it was intended to afford a passage for our troops to the Pacific Coast at just such a juncture as this." "Very sorry," the British commander would reply, "but I have strict orders to prevent any one entering it just at present."<sup>49</sup>



The same comedy, Godkin pointed out, might be re-enacted at the other end of the canal if Chile decided to declare war on the United States.

## V

Another of the ill-starred treaties negotiated in the dying days of the Arthur Administration that enlisted Godkin's interest but not his support was the reciprocal trade agreement with Spain for Cuba, signed in November, 1884. Its negotiator was a leading champion of reciprocity, John W. Foster, then minister to Spain and later to be Secretary of State. In December, 1884, Foster was paid the dubious compliment of being editorially denounced by Godkin, thus joining a rapidly growing body of past or future Secretaries of State whose fitness for office was at some time questioned by the contentious editor.<sup>50</sup> The occasion was furnished by Foster's reported remark that, in negotiating the treaty, "the Government started out on the basis of the conviction that 55,000,000 people could not trade with 2,500,000 on equal terms."<sup>51</sup> This moved Godkin to demand: "Is any man fit to negotiate a commercial treaty who has not got hold of the fundamental idea of international commerce, that all trade is barter, or, in other words, is the exchange of goods for goods, and not the matching of population against population?"<sup>52</sup> How, Godkin asked, does the Cuban owner of sugar and tobacco determine his price for his produce? "Simply by finding out what the American consumer is willing to give." And how does the American consumer determine what he is willing to give? "Simply by ascertaining what he would have to pay for similar tobacco or sugar, raised at home, or in other countries than Cuba. This, and this only, fixes the price."<sup>53</sup>

Foster's treaty suffered the fate of the Nicaraguan canal pact. Cleveland was never very favorable to reciprocity. As a back door approach to tariff "reform" it had obvious attractions, but it was equally true that it could be used to foster imperialism. Small countries like Cuba and Hawaii, by being made the grateful recipients of most-favored-nation status, could more easily be drawn within the political orbit of their powerful neighbor.

Godkin expressed the point of view of both the doctrinaire free trader and President Cleveland when he asserted that Americans were a "commercial people" to whom it was important "to have neighbors whom peace and industry make good customers, without putting us to the expense or responsibility of governing them."<sup>54</sup>

One form of "meddling" in the affairs of neighboring countries to which Godkin could generally be counted upon to give short shrift was suggested by the title of a resolution introduced in the House of Representatives on January 9, 1882, calling for the conclusion of a treaty with Mexico that would, in the words of its title, promote "reciprocal and liberal commercial relations" with that country and "secure protection" to American investments in Mexican railroads.<sup>55</sup> The fact that only the title of the resolution was known to Godkin did not deter him from rushing into print on January 12 with a full-page editorial objection to the measure. What the free trading editor specifically objected to, of course, was the word "protection." "We must," he advised,

. . . let our speculators who go either to Mexico, or Peru, or Chili, or any other South American state plainly understand that they must not look to us for any guarantee beyond what they get from the government to which they owe their grants. Their remedy for the defects of that government they must be presumed to find in the largeness of their profits.<sup>56</sup>

Unfortunately, Godkin weakened his point somewhat by stooping to argue the question of protection to American capital abroad on the basis of need. American investors in Mexico, he assured his readers, did not at present *need* the protection of the United States government. The strong man Diaz regime had raised Mexico several notches in his estimation. "According to the best accounts," he declared, "there is no part of Mexico in which life and property are less secure than they are in some parts of the United States—New Mexico and Arizona, for instance, in which large bodies of European capital are being invested every year."<sup>57</sup>

## VI

One distinguishing feature of the business diplomacy of the 1880's was the encouragement given to United States participation in international conferences. Prior to 1884 the United States had officially participated in only two such parleys.<sup>58</sup> A third, Blaine's projected Pan American Conference, originally scheduled to meet at Washington in November, 1882, was forced to await the former Secretary's return to the State Department in 1889. The next occasion saw attention focus on the Dark Continent of Africa, for it was the decade of the 1880's that witnessed the unfolding of the decisive chapter in the European partition of Africa. The United States was at once an interested onlooker and a somewhat reluctant participant. One of the prizes in the race for empire, the vast unclaimed Congo basin, had been a center of international interest since 1876, when King Leopold II of Belgium, capitalizing on the exploits of Stanley and Livingstone, organized the International African Association. The guiding interest of Leopold was self-enrichment. But the United States government, viewing the Association as a safeguard against a European monopoly of trading privileges in the Congo region, became, in 1884, the first nation to recognize the flag of the Association as "that of a friendly state" and to negotiate with it a treaty of amity and commerce.<sup>59</sup>

Late the same year, Germany belatedly entered the race for empire in Africa, when, impelled by the fear that certain European nations might take over the Congo basin and exclude German trade, Prince Bismarck initiated a conference on Congo problems to meet at Berlin. The United States was in attendance and took a prominent part in the discussions, as a result of which the Arthur Administration incurred severe criticism at home. A sizeable portion of the press interpreted the action as a violation of the historic American policy of avoiding European entanglements. For this and other reasons, the United States did not take part in the formal ratification (April 19, 1886) of the work of the conference.<sup>60</sup>

Godkin was one of those who looked upon the country's attendance at the Berlin conference with great disfavor. Styling the action "a strange proceeding," he devoted most of an editorial

on January 1, 1885, to deriding the Administration for inconsistency. The participation of the United States "in these enormous divisions of territory in the Old World," he wrote, "is of itself a little odd, considering that we are so jealous of European interference on this continent that we will not even allow Great Britain to promise to let the Isthmus of Panama alone."<sup>61</sup> This, of course, was a reference to Administration efforts to bring about the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. Additionally amusing in the editor's eyes was the spectacle of a high tariff Republican Administration joining with other nations to dedicate the new Congo state to free trade.

The following week Godkin applauded a House resolution calling for information about the attendance of the United States at the Congo Conference. He was now convinced that the American participation at Berlin was not only inconsistent with "the position we are taking up with regard to the Nicaraguan Canal," but that it was a violation of the Monroe Doctrine as well. As he wrote:

The appearance of our agents in such a Congress indicates . . . our willingness to become part of the "European system" . . . Surely if we admit that [the European nations] are not enough to manage the affairs of Central Africa, we cannot decently hold that the United States alone are competent to take charge of the American continent from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn, covered as it is in great part either by pure savagery or by "rum, Romanism, and rebellion."<sup>62</sup>

Godkin then set to work seriously to combat what he viewed as a pressing danger of American involvement in the quarrels of Europe. He feared that by its participation in the Congo Conference the United States had tacitly committed itself to assist in backing up that conference's decrees. "Nobody can tell what complications may arise out of the scramble for colonies in which the leading powers of Europe are now engaged." The country did not have a strong enough navy to undertake such obligations. "Our men-of-war dare not approach the African coast if warned off by either England, France, Germany, or Italy."<sup>63</sup>

Godkin's fears proved groundless. Enforcement of the General Act of the Congo Conference was to be vested in a commission, composed of one representative for each of the signatory nations. Among the far-reaching powers granted the commission was that of calling on signatory nations for warships in the event that the need arose. But owing to the reticence of the signers to assume any responsibility for guaranteeing its functions the commission never came into being.

## VII

In the 1880's, relations between the United States and China entered upon a difficult phase. The Burlingame treaty of 1868, by tacitly giving its blessings to the mass introduction of Chinese contract labor into the United States, had opened up a veritable Pandora's Box. By 1878 mounting hostility in Western United States to the Chinese — which manifested itself in frequent outrages on them by white workers — had brought about irresistible pressure for the abrogation of the ten year old agreement. Opponents of the treaty ranged all the way from irresponsible demagogues, fanning the flames of race hatred, to dedicated humanitarians who rightfully complained that the Chinese were being "exported" to the United States under conditions resembling involuntary servitude. Support for the treaty came from both hard-headed Eastern employers and cultivated readers of the *Nation*, although by no means all of Godkin's readers viewed the Chinese "immigration" as an unmixed blessing.

In 1879 Congress passed the Fifteen Passenger Bill. The measure prohibited ships from bringing in more than fifteen Chinese at a time. President Hayes, although privately deploring the "Chinese labor invasion," as he called it, vetoed the measure on the ground that it contravened United States treaty obligations.<sup>64</sup> He was undoubtedly bolstered in his action by knowledge of the approval it would gain from entrenched business interests.<sup>65</sup> The only way to attack the problem, it seemed, was to persuade China to agree to a substantial modification of the Burlingame treaty. To this end Hayes dispatched a commission to Peking in 1880 with authority to draw up a new treaty.



That Godkin was not in sympathy with this latest development was made clear by the hostile reception which "The Week" accorded to the Treaty of 1880 giving the United States the right to "regulate, limit or suspend" but not "absolutely prohibit" Chinese immigration.<sup>66</sup> The editor's disturbed frame of mind was intensified when Congress, after heated debate, responded to the green light given it by the treaty with a bill which, while nominally in accord with that agreement, was virtually an exclusion measure. The measure "suspended" the immigration of Chinese laborers for twenty years. After President Arthur vetoed it as contravening the spirit of the treaty, a substitute measure, lowering the suspension to ten years, was approved and became a law in 1882. Subsequent legislation, enacted as the need appeared to arise, kept the policy of exclusion firmly in force.

An interesting sidelight to the Anti Chinese agitation was the injection of the famous Morey Letter into the Presidential campaign of 1880. A forged letter, purporting to have been written by James A. Garfield, was published in an attempt to discredit the Republican candidate. In the letter Garfield purportedly voiced objection to any restriction of Chinese immigration "until our great manufacturing and corporate interests are conserved in the matter of labor." The *Nation*, although it supported Garfield's candidacy, objected to the terms of the court arraignment of the publishers of the journal which had printed the Morey letter. To a judge's ruling that the sentiments ascribed to Garfield in the letter constituted libel, the *Nation* caustically replied: "If it be libellous [*sic*] to say in a canvass that a candidate is in favor of Chinese immigration in order to keep wages down, editors of newspapers ought to know it."<sup>67</sup>

Godkin's attitude toward developments was summed up in a *Nation* editorial he wrote in March, 1882. On this occasion he wisely refrained from employing the now unpopular "cheap labor" arguments and hammered instead at the inhumanitarian aspects of Chinese exclusion. Characterizing the passage of the Twenty Year Bill as "one of the most extraordinary pieces of tergiversation in political history," he lashed at the Republican

legislators who had voted for it. He cried that they had gone back on the principles for which they fought in the Civil War and were engaged in cutting the ground from underneath the fifteenth [*sic*] amendment. According to the thoroughly irate editor, the only circumstances which justified the exclusion of anyone from the United States were those "within his control," such as "because he was ignorant or because he was poor." Yet the Chinese bill was discriminating against a race. "The bill does not exclude Chinamen because they are ignorant, or poor, or lazy, or turbulent, but because they are Mongolians."<sup>68</sup>

Godkin mistakenly assumed that opinion in the west was monolithic on the question of Chinese immigration. In passing the Chinese bill, Congress, he charged, was simply catering to "the prejudice of the 1,009,390 whites of the Pacific coast." Congress "practically surrenders to the States the right of deciding that race, color, or previous condition make a man unfit to be either an American citizen or voter."<sup>69</sup> What the mercurial editor failed to point out in his polemic was that the problem was first of all economic and only secondarily racial. The bill did not exclude all Chinese. It excluded only those whose occupations (and corresponding standard of living) were adjudged capable of offering ruinous competition to workers already in the country. Moreover, the fact that Godkin himself was opposed to conferring full rights of citizenship on the Chinese laborers was not apparent from his argument.

But, as the publicist so bitterly pointed out, the net effect of the bill was virtually to prohibit Chinese immigration "by shutting out the class of laborers which contains almost all the immigration which there is, or is likely to be." "To crown it all," Godkin scolded, "the bill introduces the passport system into America, after it has been abandoned by some of the leading nations of Europe."<sup>70</sup>

Generalizations about the views of Godkin based on an examination of a limited number of his editorials are hazardous. A case in point is his attitude toward immigration. His writings on this subject are contradictory. He maintained, for example, with fair consistency that immigration was at the bottom of municipal corruption in the United States. But when his deadly

enemy Henry Cabot Lodge made the same charge, he in characteristic fashion composed a lengthy editorial refuting the Massachusetts lawmaker.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, in 1893 he could with perfect aplomb declare that there "was no reasonable objection" to the Ten Year Act prohibiting Chinese immigration.<sup>72</sup>

Henry Adams, a much shrewder observer of the later nineteenth century scene than Godkin, charged that the editor of the *Nation* identified morality with intrenched interests and lost his influence as a result.<sup>73</sup> In support of this thesis the insincerity of Godkin's moral argument against Chinese exclusion was graphically demonstrated when, a few years after the events described above, the New Orleans *Mafia* riots thrust the question of immigration again to the forefront. On this occasion, again writing in the *Nation*, Godkin aligned himself with the excluders. Pointing out that in 1889 no less than "200,000 ignorant and obscure Italians" entered the United States, he proposed a change in the immigration laws so as to exclude members of the "Latin race." The change he proposed was that the ability to use the English language be made a requirement for immigration. This, he conceded,

would to a great extent confine immigration to English, Scotch, and Irishmen, but why not, if the restriction be really undertaken in the interest of American civilization? We are under no obligation to see that all races and nations enjoy an equal chance of getting here.<sup>74</sup>

Thus did an acknowledged spokesman for laissez faire liberalism in the United States defend one of the most strangely reactionary proposals in the history of American liberty.

### VIII

Between 1881 and 1884 the United States government was vexed by problems arising out of new disorders in Ireland. The Irish question, always political dynamite in the United States, flared up about the time that Blaine became Secretary of State. Several American citizens of Irish descent residing in or traveling through Ireland had been arbitrarily imprisoned under the British Coercion Act. Before leaving the Department of State in

December, 1881, Blaine quietly attacked the problem in two separate instructions to minister James Russell Lowell in London. It was left to his successor, aided by the press, to turn the relatively minor unpleasantness into a dispute of sizeable proportions.<sup>75</sup>

In March, 1882, Godkin discussed the "dungeon cases," as they were called, in the *Nation*. His first impulse was to side with England. He was frankly dubious as to whether law-abiding American citizens were being arbitrarily imprisoned in Ireland. It was an axiom, declared he, that "every Irish-American counts for at least five Irish-Englishmen as an apostle of sedition." He argued that it would be ridiculous for the British government to muzzle the native Land Leaguers and yet allow their most effective propagandists in Ireland to run loose.<sup>76</sup> The present difficulty, he thought, would not have arisen were it not for the fact that when an Irish-American "is put into a 'dungeon,' for the very things for which British subjects are put into jail, he does not seek relief in profane swearing simply":

He appeals to the unfortunate United States minister in London to achieve his deliverance so that he can return to his old work. In fact, what he seeks is a kind of safe conduct, to protect against the Irish police while he is engaged in encouraging the people to defy the Government and resist the law.<sup>77</sup>

At the same time, Godkin somewhat grudgingly conceded that the United States government "cannot concede the liability of American citizens, living on foreign soil, to long terms of imprisonment without any investigation whatever, however much we may disapprove of the persons who raise the question."<sup>78</sup>

So quietly had Blaine's part of the negotiations been conducted that the public was in ignorance of the arrests and of the litigation over them until after he had left the State Department. But early in 1882 stories began to circulate that the ex-Secretary had been insufficiently aggressive in pressing for the release of Irish-American "suspects." Enemies of Blaine, including, apparently, Secretary Frelinghuysen, encouraged the rumors in what appeared to be a concerted attempt to discredit Blaine with his



Irish-American following.<sup>79</sup> A few days after the Godkin editorial referred to above was published, Frelinghuysen made public the official correspondence over the Irish "dungeon cases." It served to confirm some of the suspicions which extreme Anglophobes had entertained as to Blaine. The dispatches showed that the former Secretary had acted with unusual restraint.<sup>80</sup>

The situation presented Godkin with a dilemma. Intent on attacking Blaine, he nevertheless could hardly step so far out of character as to criticize him for having failed to "twist the lion's tail." Accordingly he set his facile pen in motion to prove that the former Secretary, far from having shown a lack of solicitude for the Irish, had in reality been truckling to the Irish vote. How was this? He had "insulted" the British. In his first instructions to Lowell, "an excellent specimen of the turgid, lurid, but somewhat obscure rhetoric in which Mr. Blaine was accustomed to open his diplomatic controversies," he had inferred that Americans were being arrested in Ireland for no other offense than that their "filial instincts and love for kindred may have prompted them to revisit their native country."<sup>81</sup> Blaine should "in common courtesy" have found out in advance whether any American citizen had been imprisoned under the Coercion Act. But ascertaining the facts was, it seemed, "much too tame a method" for his "ardent and impressionable nature." Blaine's letter to Lowell, in short, was "rhetorical rubbish."<sup>82</sup>

Yet Blaine, as Godkin well knew, had been correct in inferring that American citizens were being arbitrarily imprisoned in Ireland. It is accordingly difficult to escape the conclusion that the sole interest of the editor in pursuing this line of argument was to attack Blaine. Such an interpretation is bolstered by the fact that in his very next editorial on the Irish question Godkin himself attacked "the arbitrary imprisonment," as he now termed it, of American citizens in Ireland. To Earl Granville's admission, or rather declaration, that the imprisonment of the Irish-American "suspects" was "not a measure of punishment but of prevention" Godkin replied in even stronger accents than Blaine had used that the British had no right to say that in time of peace "it may throw any foreigners into jail whom it thinks likely to commit . . . offenses."<sup>83</sup>



As for the fear Lowell had expressed in a letter to Blaine — that Lord Granville would cite the arbitrary imprisonment of foreigners by the North during the American Civil War to prejudice the American case — Godkin brushed it aside as not being applicable to the Irish question.<sup>84</sup> Yet, later on, when Granville with an air of triumph produced this argument, Blaine came in for the usual recriminations from the editor for not having raised the subject first.<sup>85</sup> Blaine's diplomacy, Godkin charged, had been conducted "in the spirit and with the methods of a smart criminal lawyer."

It was this which led him to demand the release of the suspects in the language of a stump-speech addressed to a sympathetic audience, in which trial by jury was treated as one of the rights which an American citizen carries with him, under the law of nations, all over the world. The fact that we had ourselves very recently imprisoned foreigners without trial, instead of being mentioned and discussed and its true character duly set forth, was passed over in silence, doubtless in the hope that Earl Granville would not be "smart" enough to think of it.<sup>86</sup>

The controversy continued to hold the attention of the press on both sides of the Atlantic throughout the spring of 1882. In May there were demands for the recall of Lowell. The *New York Herald* made the mistake of noting in this connection that Lowell did not enjoy the confidence of the American Irish.<sup>87</sup> This afforded Godkin a springboard for an elaborate editorial defense of the poet-diplomat. An American minister, he pointed out on May 25, should be a representative of the whole American people — not of a clamorous minority bent on "divilmint."<sup>88</sup> He ridiculed as unproved the accusations that Lowell had permitted American citizens to languish in Irish jails.<sup>89</sup> The fact was, however, that Lowell (with considerable justification) had made no attempt to gain the release of most of the Irish-Americans.

Much of the newspaper criticism of Lowell centered about his having offered the six Irish-American "suspects" forty pounds apiece to return to the United States — this being a condition of

their release. But what other editors viewed as nothing short of bribery, Godkin declared was "at worst mistaken charity." Had the defendants, he insisted, taken the money and departed for the United States they would "in three months have been claiming again the protection of the flag in Ireland."<sup>90</sup>

The real reason for Lowell's disrepute among Irish-Americans, according to Godkin, was his popularity in English society, plus the fact that he refused to cultivate American intervention in the internal affairs of Ireland. "No one," Godkin earnestly added, "has a deeper sense of the wrongs inflicted on Irishmen by English misgovernment than [I] have." In his opinion the worst thing that President Arthur could do for the Irish would be to pursue "barbarous or crazy courses in real or apparent deference to their wishes."<sup>91</sup> By giving up the honored Lowell "to be kicked, and cuffed, and driven out of office by them," Arthur would be playing directly into the hands of their bitter enemies in London who would cite it as further proof that they were "irreclaimable savages, whom nothing but buckshot could tame into civility."<sup>92</sup>

## IX

Meanwhile, unrest increased in Ireland. The British public was inclined to blame the steadily deteriorating situation on the support given the Irish cause in the United States. English newspapers were calling upon the United States government to muzzle the *Irish World* and halt the private collection of money for promoting sedition in Ireland. In March, 1883, rumor had it that "an official note embodying these complaints has found its way to Washington . . ."<sup>93</sup>

The reactions of Godkin to British criticism were not always predictable; on this occasion he flatly rejected all complaints with the advice that England cease misgoverning Ireland and "come to terms with reasonable Irishmen."<sup>94</sup> Two months later, May 17, 1883, he commented adversely on an editorial that had appeared the preceding month in the *Economist* of London, proposing that a treaty be concluded between the United States and England "binding both parties to make conspiracy to mur-

der, or to destroy property beyond their own confines, a penal offense."<sup>95</sup> Noting that such a treaty would be entered into wholly for English benefit, Godkin pointed out that to implement it in the United States would require the enactment of domestic legislation. As he wrote:

Treaties, to be sure, are part of the supreme law of the land; but when treaties relate to matters of internal regulation, legislation is necessary to make them operative . . . . That [the] authority to create new crimes is included in the treaty-making power of the President is a doctrine which even the loosest constructionists have never ventured to produce. Congress alone has the power to add to the list of offenses against international law, and to provide punishment for them . . . .<sup>96</sup>

Godkin reiterated that England, rather than the United States, had made the Irish troubles. "Everybody," he exclaimed, knew the Irish had a cause, and "that cause is long-continued misgovernment." Besides, "no conspiracy entered into here for murder or explosion in England has yet been proved"; the British authorities ought, in any event, to be "amply sufficient to deal with" the effects of any plots which might originate in the United States.<sup>97</sup>

As usual, Godkin made certain that no one connected with the controversy escaped criticism. In January, 1884, the able Congressman Abram S. Hewitt introduced a resolution in Congress requesting a stay of execution for an American citizen named O'Donnell who had been condemned to death by a British court. According to its author, the resolution sought to protect the right of an American citizen "to be hanged according to law, and not in contravention to it."<sup>98</sup> According to Godkin, the measure was a "bit of bunkum" intended to pacify the American Irish.<sup>99</sup> To the question, "What are the rights of an American citizen abroad?" Godkin emphatically replied that all the United States could ask of a foreign country was that her citizens receive equality of treatment before the law. So long as a nation dealt with American citizens "as she does with her own

subjects, or with those of other foreign powers," it made no difference how despotic her government or how arbitrary, according to American lights, her mode of administering justice.<sup>100</sup>

This definition of American rights, it will be noted, was quite at variance with the one Godkin had offered earlier in the controversy for the supposed enlightenment of the British. In 1882, for example, he had declared that "no matter how culpable the Irish-American agitators may be," the United States "can hardly admit that they may be punished without trial, or subjected to whatever punishment foreign laws may prescribe." And he added:

The difficulties the British government will have in providing different treatment for the American suspects from that which they accord to the Irish suspects will undoubtedly be great, and undoubtedly the Irish-American agitators do not deserve it. But nevertheless we do not see how our government can avoid asking for it.<sup>101</sup>

Similarly, Godkin on another occasion in 1882 acknowledged that it was "discretionary" with any government whether it would interfere in behalf of a citizen accused of violating the laws of another country.<sup>102</sup>

On February 25, 1884, an unsuccessful attempt was made to dynamite the Victoria station in London. As was customary with these occurrences, the British press blamed the outrage on Americans. The London *Times* even went so far as to accuse the United States government of "conniving" at such outrages and urged that a "strongly worded remonstrance" be presented to Washington.<sup>103</sup> A considerable segment of the American press was inclined to accept the blame. The New York *Herald* reflected the concern which many Americans felt when it declared that "it is the duty of Congress to adopt quickly the most severe and searching laws against dynamite plotters and their accessories."<sup>104</sup> Godkin, writing on March 20, was somewhat less accommodating. He viewed the British demands as another attempt to force the United States to accept responsibility for British law enforcement.

Criticizing in this connection a recent circular of the Attorney General calling on government marshals and district attorneys to enforce the laws against shipment of explosives to foreign ports, he commented that if the British customs service could not prevent dynamite from coming in, "it is folly to ask any foreign police to do it."<sup>105</sup> He pointed out, moreover, that it was both illegal and contrary to the spirit of American free institutions to search persons for dynamite going on board ocean steamships. He concluded with this sound advice:

In this dynamite business it is well for us to proceed very cautiously, for everything that we do will be cited hereafter as a precedent, and there is no field of international activity in which it is more important to be cautious than that of recognizing the right of foreign governments to inquire into the enforcement of our domestic laws.<sup>106</sup>

It was not long, however, before circumstances prompted Godkin radically to alter his position. The bombings continued. By January, 1885, a now thoroughly aroused editor was making in the *Nation* the very proposals that he had earlier rejected. They were that the United States government (1) muzzle the Irish-American press ("No such publications were ever before allowed in a civilized nation"); (2) make it illegal to collect money in the United States to be used in Irish terrorist activity abroad.<sup>107</sup> Apart from his horror over the damage to property caused by the bombings, some of Godkin's sudden change of heart must be attributed to the fact that the Irish question had been caught up in the Presidential contest of the preceding fall. The hated Blaine, it seems, had carefully cultivated the Irish vote during the campaign. Toward this end, charged the editor, the "worst" of the Irish newspapers had been heavily subsidized "out of the Republican campaign funds." (This, of course, in spite of the celebrated "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion" remark of the Reverend Mr. Burchard, which may have cost Blaine the election.)



## X

Side by side with the Irish question as a recurrent threat to harmonious relations between the United States and England was the question of extradition. Although it could hardly be called a major bone of contention, the question invited an extraordinary amount of official correspondence between the two countries during the 1870's and 1880's.<sup>108</sup> Trouble arose over the attempt to apply an inadequate and outmoded extradition treaty to modern conditions. The treaty of 1842, which was still in force in 1870, had listed only seven extraditable offenses; no provision, for instance, was made for such crimes as embezzling, burglary, forgery, manslaughter, and smuggling.

Misunderstandings arising out of the inevitable "loose construction" given the Treaty on both sides of the Atlantic led Parliament in 1870 to pass a law imposing certain restrictions upon British participation in the extradition process. No longer, for instance, was a criminal to be handed over to the United States to be tried for an offense other than that for which extradition was formally sought. This did not stop a practice which by now had become widespread, and in 1875 the British government made an issue of the evasion of the Act of 1870 in the case of a criminal extradited to the United States. The following year, the British government in retaliation temporized on American demands for the surrender of several fugitive criminals.<sup>109</sup> Ill feeling between the two governments mounted.<sup>110</sup>

Godkin devoted a page of the *Nation* to the dispute in May, 1876. The question at issue was the legality of the Act of 1870, the United States maintaining that as domestic legislation it was not applicable to the extradition process. Godkin conceded that there were two strong points in the American case. First, the United States could never "admit that its rights under a treaty can be modified by a municipal enactment of the other party." Secondly, the British government had on previous occasions disregarded its own enactment and had itself "tried men for one offense when they had been surrendered to it by this country for another."<sup>111</sup> But Great Britain, Godkin asserted, had since taken stronger ground in the dispute. Lord Derby had

answered Secretary Fish in substance that England stood on the "right reserved by international law to the parties to every extradition treaty to judge whether a demand for the surrender of a criminal under the treaty is made in good faith, and to exact a pledge, if deemed necessary, that he shall not be tried for any offense not specified in the treaty."<sup>112</sup> With this British position Godkin fully agreed. Such a right, he affirmed, was "acknowledged by the text-books" and was not done away with by the Treaty. Each nation, in other words, had discretion coming from "general principles of international law" in interpreting its treaty obligations. The editor illustrated his contention as follows:

For instance, Great Britain has refused to surrender under the Treaty a slave guilty of killing his master in order to secure his freedom; and we have refused to surrender an Irish tenant guilty of killing his landlord. In both cases, what each Government said was: "What you call murder, and believe to be covered by the Treaty, we do not consider murder in the sense in which the word is used in the Treaty. The circumstances of the case give it in our eyes a different complexion, and we are the sole judges of our duty in the premises."<sup>113</sup>

Moreover, the American practice of offering an extraditable offense as a pretext to seize a man in order to try him for something else was using the treaty "to secure the punishment of offences which the contracting parties did not intend it should secure." The fact that Britain had herself engaged in the practice and was now, in a very exasperating way, refusing to surrender a "very great rascal" did not in the slightest affect the "law of the matter."<sup>114</sup> As a remedy Godkin proposed that the treaty of 1842 be revised to expand the number of extraditable offenses.

This advice was not at once heeded. The fugitives about whose heads the dispute had simmered were surrendered to the United States, and the two governments lapsed into their old ways of handling the problem. Shortly after Fish left the State Department, England appointed a royal commission to study the extradition laws. In 1880 the large-scale recurrence of Irish dis-

orders helped bring the problem once again to the forefront. After nine years of intermittent negotiation, a new extradition treaty was signed between the two countries on June 25, 1886,<sup>115</sup> but by expanding the list of extraditable offenses to include semi-political offenses, such as dynamiting, it incurred bitter hostility in the United States and was never ratified.<sup>116</sup> Even the *Nation*, which had been agitating for a new treaty for ten years, appeared to have certain reservations about the dynamite clause.<sup>117</sup>

## A "Vigorous" Foreign Policy

If Godkin was given to extremes in his attacks on James G. Blaine, he partly made up for this failing by the sympathetic understanding which he accorded to Grover Cleveland.<sup>1</sup> In March, 1889, Cleveland, the first Democratic President since the Civil War, stepped down from his first term in office. His term in the White House had seen a great deal of the customary pulling and hauling in the editorial rooms of the *Evening Post* organization; in general the verdict of Godkin and his associates had been favorable. Willing to overlook Cleveland's sexual indiscretions (which Godkin compared favorably with those of Great Americans), his bibulous habits (which to some extent the editor shared), and his broken election promises (which could be blamed on the party rather than the man), the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* were genuinely sorry to see the President go.

Thus, while not denying that Cleveland's Administration had fallen short in certain important respects, Godkin was disposed to view it as one of the few bright spots in an otherwise dreary decade. In the realm of foreign policy, where there were no startling developments, he had found less to criticize than in any previous administration — that of Hayes included. This, more than any other single factor, operated to keep his relations with Cleveland on an even keel. The perhaps inevitable break between the two was postponed until the New Yorker's second term.

Several hints of the respect in which the *Nation* and *Evening Post* were held at the White House during Cleveland's first

incumbency are contained in that part of the Bayard correspondence which has been edited by Professor C. C. Tansill. Cleveland's Secretary of State, Thomas F. Bayard, was repelled by the patronizing tone of Godkin and his associates. The *Evening Post*, Bayard once remarked, was published "upon such a height of superiority and egotism that everything that comes from it towards a Democrat has an insufferable flavor of condescension." Yet he consulted with its editors frequently on matters relating to foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> Except for the early days of the Hayes Administration, such attention from the White House was a novel experience for Godkin.

The bulk of the correspondence was between Bayard and Horace White, whom the Secretary chose to regard in place of Godkin as official spokesman for the *Evening Post* organization. Yet White, in his capacity as associate editor of the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* and president of the *Evening Post* Publishing Company, spoke for both himself and Godkin. The close identity of viewpoint between the two men appears to have prevented friction; indeed, White on occasion became so pessimistic that his editorials were virtually indistinguishable in that regard from those of his "chief." The following passage from a letter which he wrote to Bayard in 1886 might well have been written by Godkin:

I thank you for sending me a copy of the President's Message relative to the Chinese Treaty Stipulation. I shall take it home and read it tomorrow, and shall endeavor to agree with you, for I always find that a comfort. It is hard to keep civilization going. Sometimes I think that Bismarck's way is best.<sup>3</sup>

But chiefly the correspondence concerned the current fisheries dispute with Great Britain. After a treaty negotiated by Bayard had been voted down in the Senate (August, 1888), and Blaine had re-entered the Department of State, White consoled Bayard as follows: "Your management of the State Department will be vindicated by history, and will be better appreciated by your contemporaries when, if ever, Mr. Blaine essays to do something besides peddle consulships to his friends."<sup>4</sup>



At the same time, the conspicuous unfitness of some of Cleveland's appointees evoked both personal and editorial protest from the editors of the *Evening Post*. Godkin once wrote Cleveland in a vain attempt to block a cabinet appointment of which he disapproved.<sup>5</sup> On another occasion he personally protested a diplomatic assignment to Secretary Bayard.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, when the able Henry White was dismissed from his post as first secretary of the American legation in London, Godkin entered an emphatic protest with the President about it.<sup>7</sup>

One of the Cleveland diplomatic appointments which proved embarrassing may have been directly owing to the influence of Godkin. Arthur C. Sedgwick, who as both a prominent New York City lawyer and assistant editor of the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* was an intimate associate of Godkin, was dispatched to Mexico in 1886 as a special agent of the Department of State to inquire into the vexatious Cutting Case.<sup>8</sup> While in the Mexican capital Sedgwick became involved in a minor scandal. Charges were made that he had subjected himself to physical abuse and his country to gross insult at the hands of drunken Mexican companions, and had been found dead drunk in a house of prostitution. Although the weight of evidence was clearly against Sedgwick, the charges appeared to have been politically motivated, and Cleveland obstinately refused to recall him.<sup>9</sup>

One of the relatively few major editorial complaints of Godkin against Cleveland prior to the Venezuelan boundary controversy with England was that he had failed to live up to campaign promises to bring about consular reform.<sup>10</sup> Although the editor seldom directly concerned himself with matters involving American representation elsewhere than at European capitals, he was articulate as to the general need for improvement. In this connection in 1886 his attention was drawn to a consular practice which seemed to him so pernicious that he editorialized at length on it in both the *Nation* and the *Evening Post*.

In Morocco and other Moslem states the representatives of Christian powers were by treaty granted civil and criminal jurisdiction over their own nationals. In practice, said Godkin, it had worked out that foreign consuls were for a consideration bestowing "protections" indiscriminately. Every consulate in those coun-

tries, and especially Morocco, it seems, was "surrounded by a parcel of adventurers of every clime and creed, who have in some manner acquired 'protection,' either through favor or for cash, and use it as a means of preying on the natives."<sup>11</sup> A number of these "quasi Americans," according to Godkin, surrounded the American consul at Tangier.

Godkin's information was based on charges put forth by a certain Jon Perdicaris. Perdicaris, described by the editor as an American resident of Tangier, had been fined and imprisoned by the American consul assertedly for complaining of the above-mentioned practice. The specific complaint of Godkin was that at the time of writing no action had been taken beyond an official disapproval of Consul Matthew's conduct and orders for him to return the fine of Perdicaris.<sup>12</sup> Godkin probably erred in calling Perdicaris an American. It was this man who, eighteen years later, became the center of an international incident when he was kidnapped from Tangier by a native chieftain. Two squadrons of the United States navy and a bombastic telegram from Secretary of State Hay converged on Morocco before Perdicaris was finally released. Serious doubts were expressed during and after the affair as to the validity of his claim to American citizenship.<sup>13</sup>

## II

The one serious diplomatic problem awaiting action when Cleveland left office in 1889 was the Bering Sea (fur seal) question.<sup>14</sup> Cleveland and his Secretary of State could scarcely have chosen — if they had tried — a more vexatious dispute to drop into the laps of their Republican successors. As for Godkin, his major interest in the question seemed to be in the opportunity which it afforded for attacking the incoming administration. The particular object of his wrath was to be the controversial James G. Blaine, now beginning his second term in the Cabinet.

With the change in administration, Godkin's pipeline to the Department of State had been closed off. He was accordingly forced to turn to less reliable sources for information. As a result Blaine was unjustly accused by the *Evening Post* of having adopted an aggressive attitude which led to an American defeat

in the Fur Seal arbitration. In March, 1891, its editor undertook to recount the history of the controversy in order to refute Blaine's defenders.<sup>15</sup> Blaine fired the controversy, Godkin inferred, when he "took the law into his own hands by authorizing or permitting American cruisers to seize British ships in the open sea, and carry them into port as lawful prizes."<sup>16</sup>

The truth was, of course, that the aggressive policy, including the precedent for the seizures which Godkin so bitterly condemned, was an inheritance from the Cleveland Administration. Blaine on re-entering the State Department had fallen heir to an executive *fait accompli*, backed up by a decree of Congress and an overwhelmingly approving public opinion. Even so, discretion might have dictated a hasty retreat, but being Blaine he resolutely set out to make the best, or, as Godkin would say, the most, of a bad situation. In January, 1891, at the height of the war of words with England which followed, Godkin offered the following trenchant description of what he characterized the "strictly journalistic" diplomacy of Blaine:

He always begins his discussions, as we said the other day, horns down. He assumes from the outset that his adversary is a tricky, grasping, light-headed fellow, whom he is determined to expose in his true light to a disgusted world. How the affair will end, whether in peace or war, he cares but little, if he can achieve his own rhetorical triumph.<sup>17</sup>

There is no denying that in his diplomatic duel with Lord Salisbury the ailing Blaine was pompous and irascible. That he was worsted by the Englishman is likewise clear. But that his handling of the legally indefensible position bequeathed him by his predecessors was totally inexperienced, as Godkin maintained, is questionable. Certainly if ever a situation called for Blaine's ability "to raise up a cloud of words," as Godkin aptly described it, it was this. The editor and his associates were accordingly something less than fair when they stated, August 17, 1893, that the arbitrators, in resolving the controversy in favor of England,

had declared Blaine's history "to be fiction; his geography pure fancy; and his international law a mere whim."<sup>18</sup>

An incident which, along with the Bering Sea controversy, rated modest newspaper headlines during the early months of 1891 and elicited a disproportionate share of the interest of Godkin was the Barrundia affair. Involving both the State and Navy Departments, it primarily concerned American naval officer Commander Reiter, who had been dismissed from his ship and publicly reprimanded by the Secretary of the Navy for failing to offer asylum to a Guatemalan political fugitive, General Barrundia. Barrundia was shot to death by Guatemalan authorities while resisting arrest on an American merchant ship anchored near the vessel commanded by Reiter in the harbor of San José.

The summary action against Reiter became a minor *cause célèbre*, and Godkin joined other anti-Administration editors in making the most of the opportunity it afforded to lift Republican scalps. Asserting that it was not "incumbent on American commanders to pursue refugees with offers of asylum," Godkin acknowledged himself mystified as to how the United States could have been disgraced, as Senator Lodge insisted it was, by a man's being shot down while "resisting lawful arrest on board an American merchant vessel."<sup>19</sup>

The legally sound but otherwise intemperate approach of Godkin to the controversy was well summed up in the endorsement he gave to the remarks of a doughty and sometimes irresponsible old Blaine antagonist, Congressman Boutelle of Maine. Boutelle had declared: "... I have little sympathy with the idea that the principal duty of the United States Government and its navy is to send its ships around the globe to hunt up the political conspirators, revolutionists, anarchists, and nihilists of other countries in order to aid them in their attempts to overthrow established and orderly governments . . . ." These "rational and weighty" remarks, declared Godkin, (actually they were quite irrelevant) should have been made by Lodge — "considering his training and antecedents" — rather than Boutelle. "... but apparently no job the administration can assign Mr. Lodge now does violence either to his tastes or his principles."<sup>20</sup>

## III

One of James G. Blaine's least criticized actions as Secretary of State was in the controversy with Italy arising out of the tragic New Orleans *Mafia* incident of March 14, 1891.<sup>21</sup> Even Godkin put aside his rancor long enough to register his approval — of Blaine's aggressiveness, that is. "Secretary Blaine's answer to Baron Fava is very neat and complete," he wrote on April 9, 1891. "It makes the position of the Italian government difficult to comprehend." His only criticism of the Secretary — a rather startling one — was that he had been inclined to be *too conciliatory* toward the Italians. Godkin took the standard view that the massacre was purely a local matter over which the Federal government regrettably had no jurisdiction. "There is," he unhesitatingly concluded, "really hardly any material in the case for diplomatic discussion."<sup>22</sup>

While Blaine was still seeking to placate an Italian government completely outraged over the *Mafia* incident, the scene suddenly shifted to Chile. There, early in 1891, a long-standing feud between President Balmaceda and Congress had erupted into a civil war. It was not long before the United States became involved. Early in May, 1891, a rebel (Congressional) vessel, the *Itata*, put in at San Diego, California, preparatory to taking on a shipment of arms purchased in the United States for the Congressional cause. The United States Attorney-General, fearful of complications with the Balmaceda government, ordered the vessel detained as a would-be offender against the neutrality laws of the United States. But on May 6 it escaped from the harbor — kidnapping a United States deputy in the process — and headed for Chile. A United States cruiser gave chase. For a time a clash seemed imminent.<sup>23</sup>

During the week of May 17, 1891, Godkin made the *Itata* affair the subject of an editorial in the *Evening Post* and the *Nation*. He left no doubt as to his position. Citing numerous authorities on international law to bolster his contention that the rebels were entitled to belligerent rights, he argued that to attack the *Itata* on the open sea would be a violation of neutrality "by taking part in the hostilities on the side of President Balma-



ceda."<sup>24</sup> He brushed aside the argument of the Attorney-General that the neutrality laws of the country obligated it — under the Geneva findings in the case of the *Alabama* — to pursue the *Itata* and capture her. In the first place, held Godkin, it was not clear that the *Itata* had violated any neutrality laws. "Whether she has committed an offence remains to be determined, for it is a good law that American citizens may sell ships fit for war to foreign belligerents even, no matter where they take on their armaments." Secondly, the neutrality laws were domestic legislation and foreigners who violated them could only be captured "within our jurisdiction."<sup>25</sup> It should be noted, in the face of accusations to the contrary later made by Godkin, that this seems to have been substantially the position of Secretary of State Blaine.<sup>26</sup>

The New York *Times* did not subscribe to Godkin's argument and produced in justification of the pursuit of the *Itata* the wording of the award of the Geneva Tribunal in the case of the *Alabama*. The award stated in part: "And whereas, after the escape of that vessel, the measures taken for its pursuit and arrest were so imperfect as to lead to no result, and cannot be considered sufficient to relieve Great Britain from the responsibility already incurred . . . ."<sup>27</sup> To which Godkin retorted that there was not "either in the correspondence, or negotiations, or litigation arising out of the *Alabama* claims, the shadow of a suggestion, much less an assertion, that Great Britain was bound or had the right to pursue any of the escaped Confederate cruisers on the high seas." England, he insisted, was condemned for not capturing the *Alabama* when she came back within British jurisdiction.<sup>28</sup>

The position which Godkin and other Democratic publicists in the United States took was upheld by the courts. The *Itata*, which had in the meantime been surrendered to the United States, was returned to its owners. It was hardly a coincidence in the case of Godkin that his winning arguments happened to support the Congressional side. Something must be ascribed to partisanship. It will be recalled that when, a decade before, Blaine was laboring to prevent Chile from dismembering Peru during the War of the Pacific, the outspoken editor condemned him as a "meddler." In short, Godkin's position then had been that

South American conflicts were none of the country's business. Similarly, he had contended that *de facto* control, not approval, was the criterion for the recognition of a foreign government.<sup>29</sup>

The civil war in Chile was, in the eyes of Godkin, apparently an altogether different matter. As was common in controversies in which he took part, there were two Godkins. The first of them correctly announced at the beginning of the struggle that Balmaceda had acted constitutionally in dismissing Congress.<sup>30</sup> The second, the Godkin which quickly gained the ascendancy, found that he was "an impeachable traitor and usurper" who, instead of foreign recognition, deserved trial and punishment.<sup>31</sup> The mere fact that the Chilean President had *de facto* control of the central government, he heatedly argued, did not justify the United States in "countenancing" him. The impulsive editor strongly hinted that he would not object to an intervention in Chile provided it were on the Congressionalist side.<sup>32</sup> It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Godkin, in so arguing, was permitting the English affinity for the Congressionalist cause to sway his judgment. Whatever the merits of the struggle, there is no question but that the United States was formally correct in continuing to recognize the Balmaceda government while it was in power.

The situation abruptly changed, however, in September, 1891, when the civil war ended in a Congressional triumph. A revolutionary junta swiftly took over the reins of government, pending formal elections. The termination of hostilities did not at once bring tranquility to war-scarred Chile; the fratricidal struggle had engendered passions which now found relief in a relentless persecution of the vanquished. The luckier of the Balmacedists found asylum in foreign legations and on foreign cruisers. Meanwhile, their erstwhile President and leader, who had taken refuge in the Argentine legation, committed suicide — hoping, as he said, to spare his host embarrassment and gain more lenient treatment for his followers.

Anti-foreign feeling by the victorious Congressional faction ran high, especially against the United States. As if to rub salt in still open wounds, its minister Patrick Egan had opened his legation doors to fleeing Balmacedists. On October 16, 1891,

occurred the famous *Baltimore* incident, during which a band of American sailors on shore leave from the cruiser of that name anchored in Valparaiso harbor was set upon by a Chilean mob. There was some evidence that Chilean police had abetted the assailants. Two Americans died and many were stabbed and beaten. After waiting a week in vain for some explanation from Chile of the incident, Acting Secretary of State Wharton — Blaine was ill at his home in Maine at the time — cabled the American minister to launch a strong protest.

This was where matters stood when Godkin rejoined the fray in the last week of October. The pro-Cleveland editor, it was at once apparent, was bent on fastening the blame for the crisis squarely on the Harrison Administration. The *Baltimore* outrage, he declared on October 29,<sup>33</sup> was "the natural outcome of our whole treatment of Chili since the present Administration came into power."<sup>34</sup> A week later he turned to a now familiar theme:

That such an affair should be looked upon for one moment as likely to imperil seriously the good relations of the two countries, is a striking commentary on the way in which our diplomacy . . . has been conducted since the unfortunate day, in 1881, when Mr. James G. Blaine was converted into a Minister of Foreign Affairs.<sup>35</sup>

Godkin somewhat stubbornly sought to justify the conduct of Chile by the following analogy: "If our Government had had to put up with a similar series of annoyances and slights from the British Minister and Navy during the rebellion, we venture to say British sailors in uniform would have run considerable risk in appearing on our streets in 1862 . . . ."<sup>36</sup>

What were these "annoyances and slights" that Chile had had to "put up with" from the United States? Number one on Godkin's bill of particulars was Patrick Egan. He described the minister as an "illiterate foreign adventurer" whom Blaine had sent to represent the United States to the "cultivated, proud and sensitive men who represent the Chilean Republic."<sup>37</sup> "We

cannot recall in diplomatic history," cried Godkin, "any such slight offered by a great Power to a friendly nation." (This was nonsense. There was no opposition by the Chilean government to the Egan appointment. It was the British colony in Santiago that objected to it. Godkin was more candid two months later when he charged that the Egan appointment was "irritating to England and to her friends in Chili").<sup>38</sup>

Number two on Godkin's list of supposed Chilean grievances was Blaine himself. In the first place, claimed the editor, Chile had "never got over Mr. Blaine's antics in the Peruvian Landreau affair, but she was in a fair way of doing so when he flung his 'Blaine Irishman' at her head, for his own base and selfish purposes . . . ."<sup>39</sup> Secondly, Blaine was responsible for the current crisis. Had he been a "civilized man," he would "have studiously avoided the faintest appearance of a resort to force until the resources of negotiation in this matter of the attack on the American sailors in Valparaiso had been completely exhausted."<sup>40</sup>

The truth of the matter was that when the developments to which Godkin referred took place, Blaine, as has been previously indicated, was ill at his home in Maine. It was not Blaine, as Godkin made it appear, but Acting Secretary Wharton, in consultation with the President, who took the steps of which the editor so bitterly complained. Indeed, Wharton's cablegram of October 23 has been regarded by some as entirely the work of Harrison and as committing Blaine to a stern policy toward Chile of which he strongly disapproved. It is probable that Blaine's ultimate falling out with the President had its inception in this period.<sup>41</sup>

Scrupulous accuracy was clearly not Godkin's forte when he was aroused. The self-styled "sober critic" had now become the passionate advocate, pleading the cause of elongated "little Chili" against the bullying Colossus of the North. How had his client responded to the Egan appointment? She had borne that "insult" with "great patience" when she would have been quite justified in refusing to receive Egan. Was the United States government mollified by this commendable "forebearance" on Chile's part? No. ". . . when an attempt was made a little later by the President [of Chile] to overturn the Republic,"

... we at once ... showed our sympathy with the traitor, and treated him — a rebel in arms — as the lawful Chilean government. When the men who ... represented all that was left of the Constitution, tried to buy a few cases of arms in the United States, we pounced on them almost with fury as public enemies, and started one of the new cruisers, with great noise, to "blow them out of the water" for committing a misdemeanor.<sup>42</sup>

These were serious charges which Godkin was making against his adopted country, and there were more to follow. There was, it seems, the "strongest kind of evidence" that the flagship of the United States squadron had been used during the civil war to furnish the Chilean President with "important information about movements of the Congressional army."<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the United States minister — Egan — had been not only "an accomplice in a conspiracy for the overthrow of the Government to which he was accredited, and the establishment of a dictatorship," but had been privately engaged with Balma-ceda in a huge financial speculation.<sup>44</sup>

Charge number one, involving the flagship, was beyond reasonable doubt true.<sup>45</sup> As for the rest of Godkin's charges, there is little evidence to support them. Egan, although a rank amateur, appears to have performed his diplomatic duties with ability and tact. Despite the barrage of criticism aimed at him by the Cleveland press, he remained at his post, serving with credit to the end of the Harrison Administration. Theodore Roosevelt rated the work of Egan as almost on a par with that of Henry White, who he thought was "the most useful man in the entire diplomatic service."<sup>46</sup>

#### IV

To return to the *Baltimore* incident: — while Godkin was busy attacking Administration policy toward Chile, the days had stretched into weeks without a word of regret or explanation from that country over the attack on the American sailors. The reply of Chile to Secretary Wharton's cabled instructions of October 23, 1891, had been deemed sufficiently nonconciliatory



in tone as to remain unanswered. Tension mounted in the United States. Finally, on December 9, in his annual message to Congress, President Harrison alluded to the dispute in terms which offered an unmistakable threat to the South American republic. Godkin editorially pronounced the message "full from first to last of the grossest insults to the Chilian government, which in private life no civilized man would think of uttering without expecting to be knocked down by the person on whom they were heaped."<sup>47</sup> Hot-headed Chilean foreign minister Señor Matta, himself a professional journalist, was apparently of the same opinion; he shot back a highly offensive note that further widened the breach between the two countries.

Editorial tempers flared; the controversy moved into the dusty arena of domestic politics. His patriotism seriously in question, Godkin sought to defend himself by impugning the motives of his attackers. On one occasion he wrote:

We never have the smallest difference with a foreign Power, when our newspapers and some of our public men do not *at once* begin to talk of an appeal to arms, to count our ships and guns, to accuse the other side of "arrogance and insult," and "mendacity," and "hypocrisy," and "deceit," and to assure the President of the support of Congress in case he should immediately resort to hostilities.<sup>48</sup>

Professional "patriots" of the Blaine stripe, charged Godkin on November 26, 1891, "seem to thank God that they have a country to disgrace by lying, cheating, double-dealing, sophistry, and humbug, and proposing to thrash any one who complains."<sup>49</sup> The editor, it seems, had measured American conduct against European standards and found it wanting. Whereas, declared he, the "model of diplomatic discussion" in European countries "is that of two gentlemen seated at a table trying to clear up a misunderstanding or make a contract on a matter of business," the model of the United States "often seems to be that of two hostile 'toughs' who have met by chance in a bar-room, and are bent on clearing off old scores, each watching closely lest the other should 'get the drop' on him."<sup>50</sup>

In 1891 Godkin was sixty and in declining health. He did not take to his advancing years gracefully, his letters reveal, and he seems to have wasted precious time envying young people. About this time he had gotten it into his head that the majority of the purveyors of war talk in the newspaper press were youths — the “young men,” as he had begun to style jingo journalists of the New York *Tribune* school. Once, drawing on a single adolescent letter for evidence, he devoted a full-page editorial to “exposing” jingoism as a juvenile plot — the work of “patriots under eighteen.” “In every country in the world,” Godkin lamented, “it is the minors who are readiest to rally round the flag and hurl defiance against a world in arms . . . . But in no country but our own are these youths allowed to stir up bellicose passions in the public press and propose to fight first and negotiate afterwards.”<sup>51</sup>

How far Godkin was willing to carry his quasi pacifism was suggested by the character of the ridicule which he regularly bestowed upon “honor” as a legitimate object of armed contention between nations. In January, 1892, he effected the following interesting analogy between the *Baltimore* incident and a point of personal honor:

A man elopes with your wife, which is a deadly insult . . . and you are therefore “dishonored” if you do not fight him. . . . But even if you kill him, it does not restore your wife or your domestic peace. . . . The duel proves nothing except that neither of the disputants is afraid to fight.<sup>52</sup>

In the opinion of the practical Godkin, “honor” — the question of whether or not the people of Valparaiso had intentionally “insulted” the uniform of the United States — was not germane to the *Baltimore* dispute. The real issue, he insisted, was how much money Chile should be asked to pay to the families of the victims. It “is in getting what we want without the use of force” that “we show our civilization and our modernness.”<sup>53</sup>

The controversy ended in January, 1892. Chile, bowing to a virtual ultimatum from President Harrison, acceded to United States demands and offered full satisfaction for the *Baltimore*

incident. The country in general breathed a sigh of relief; however, circumstances attendant to the capitulation — Harrison had sent off a warlike message to Congress while a reply to his ultimatum was momentarily expected — now stirred the Democratic press to new attacks on the Administration.<sup>54</sup> Godkin, who was in the vanguard of the critics, conveyed the news of the forced Chilean apology to readers of the *Evening Post* on January 29. In an editorial outburst more distinguished for impassioned feeling than for accuracy, entitled "The Shame of It," he pilloried the Administration for its alleged maltreatment of Chile. Crying that "no episode nearly so discreditable is to be found in the annals of American diplomacy," he accused Harrison of attempting to "forestall an apology by a snap declaration of war."

The rest of Godkin's charges, with one or two additions, were those with which readers of the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* were already familiar. Despite the determination of President Harrison to "force a quarrel" on them, the Chileans, with the exception of Señor Matta, had "acted all through as gentlemen and men of sense"; they had "gone through the agony of a civil war, and borne our insults and abuse with patient courage." How much the Chileans had been forced to put up with from the United States, Godkin indicated as follows:

We began the process of alienating and irritating the Chilians by the appointment of Egan as our Minister — in itself contemptuous to the verge of insult. We continued it by open displays of sympathy with Balmaceda during the civil war; by our seizure and pursuit of the *Itata*, in disregard of the law as laid down by our State Department; by permitting our naval officers during four months to sneer at, abuse, defy, and threaten the Chilians, with the permission or approval of our Navy Department and the loud encouragement of our Government press. When the riot occurred, we forced on the Chilians, with an absolute disregard of the decencies of diplomatic intercourse, a view of governmental responsibility for mob violence which we had ourselves a short time previously utterly repudiated.<sup>55</sup>

Assuming that the volatile Godkin was correct in his assumptions, Harrison, it would seem, was at least receiving well merited punishment. For the President was "at this moment," Godkin exclaimed, "an object of ridicule in Congress, and in fact all over the world."<sup>56</sup>

## V

But Godkin's denunciation of Harrison was almost mild in contrast to the treatment which he accorded Grover Cleveland during the Venezuelan crisis with England in 1895.

In 1893 Cleveland entered upon his second term of office. The *Evening Post* organization renewed its support of the President; Godkin especially was gratified by his stand that year against the annexation of Hawaii. This did not mean that the commercially motivated editor was totally oblivious to the economic value of the islands. He believed simply that they could be more profitably exploited as a protectorate than as a possession. "We could not by annexation at this moment gain anything which we do not now possess," he announced shortly before Cleveland's inauguration in March, 1893, "except the privilege of paying the expenses of the Hawaiian government."<sup>57</sup>

A major fear of Godkin was that the formal acquisition of the Hawaiian Islands would mean their speedy elevation to statehood. How long would it be after annexation, he asked, before the United States would acquire a new batch of "ignorant, superstitious, and foreign tongued" voters? "Judging from recent experience, about four years, at all events, only until one party or another wanted two more Senators of the kind now sent from Nevada, Wyoming, and Idaho."<sup>58</sup> His advice to his countrymen was that they serve notice on the planter government now in control in Hawaii: "You have United States troops on your soil now, and if it would make you feel easier, we will leave them permanently, but we do not care to undertake the task of governing your very motley population, on condition of allowing it to help to govern us."<sup>59</sup>

In January, 1893, occurred the death of James G. Blaine. The tactless Godkin, far from allowing the event to take from him his number one "whipping boy," continued his attacks

on the statesman. The Hawaiian annexation scheme, he concluded in December, 1893, in one of his periodic blistering summations of the dead man's diplomacy, was "the last conception of a disordered and virulent ambition."<sup>60</sup> Having already accused Blaine of instigating the revolt in Hawaii by which the Queen was deposed, Godkin demanded, "Is there a single feature . . . in this . . . annexation which does not find a parallel in the great historic robberies and usurpations?"<sup>61</sup>

Another outpost of budding imperialism which had for several years undergone the critical scrutiny of the New York editor was Samoa, where, by the terms of a tripartite treaty concluded in 1889, the United States, Great Britain, and Germany were in joint control. In 1894 mounting friction between the occupying powers, partly induced by a native civil war, gave rise to demands that the United States withdraw from the archipelago. The *Literary Digest* presented the case for the anti-imperialists, in May, 1894, when it asserted that the American people were solidly opposed to any further outlay of money for combating native factions in Samoa.<sup>62</sup> Concurrently in the *Nation*, Godkin, in an obvious reference to the Pullman Strike then getting under way, was lamenting: "Our trying to keep the Samoans in order when we cannot protect our great lines of railroads from armies of tramps, is surely a grotesque spectacle . . . ."<sup>63</sup>

Declaring that the "condition and prospects" of Samoa concerned the United States no more than the "condition and prospects of the Cape of Good Hope," Godkin strongly urged that the country get out of the archipelago. But when the next week several leading Republican senators, including the prominent jingo, Senator Hunt of Alabama, publicly gave their assent to the withdrawal, the editor suddenly became cautious. Writing on May 24, he was still of the opinion, though decidedly less firm on the point, that it would be wise to get out of Samoa. "There is no doubt that the Australians will eventually get Samoa and keep it, and we might as well urge now that it be turned over to them." Nevertheless, Godkin indicated that he would support United States retention of the harbor of Pago Pago.<sup>64</sup>



By 1894 the near-honeymoon atmosphere as regards foreign affairs which had marked Godkin's relations with Grover Cleveland at the beginning of his second term had begun to fade. For some months there had been apparent in the columns of the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* a growing dissatisfaction with Administration handling of diplomatic and consular appointments.<sup>65</sup> In 1895 Godkin dramatically broke with the President on Cleveland's intervention in the long-standing boundary controversy between England and Venezuela.

An original major point of contention in the dispute had been Point Barima, which commanded the mouth of that vital Venezuelan artery, the Orinoco River. The British contended that the western boundary of British Guiana embraced Point Barima, together with a considerable amount of other territory occupied by Venezuela. The first part of this contention, but not the second, was bolstered by the British-sponsored Schomburgk survey, run in 1840. Subsequently England offered tentatively to surrender Point Barima to Venezuela, the rest of the boundary to follow the Schomburgk line.<sup>66</sup> The Venezuelan government in declining the proposal countered that Point Barima was not Britain's to offer. It revealed among other things that in 1836 British chargé d'affaires at Caracas Sir Robert Ker Porter had proposed in writing to Venezuelan authorities that they erect a beacon on Cape Barima to guide ships coming into the area — a tacit admission, though obviously unauthorized by the Foreign Office, of Venezuelan ownership. Embarrassed by the disclosure, the British government in recounting the history of the dispute saw fit to refer to Porter only as "the British consul," which inferior capacity he held in addition to accredited diplomatic representative (*chargé*).<sup>67</sup>

How did the United States become involved in the dispute? No less of a Godkin favorite than the cautious Secretary Gresham<sup>68</sup> had privately found the position of England toward Venezuela to be "contradictory and palpably unjust." Writing to Minister Bayard in London in March, 1895, Gresham pointed out that Britain periodically had expanded her claims to include territory "which she previously recognized as belonging to Venezuela." He predicted: "If Great Britain undertakes to

maintain her present position on that question, we will be obliged, in view of the almost uniform attitude and policy of our government, to call a halt."<sup>69</sup> This was clearly a reference to the Monroe Doctrine.

Two months later, when Gresham died, the problem dropped into the lap of his successor, Richard Olney, who, as it turned out, was anything but cautious. In July, 1895, Olney drafted his memorable "twenty inch gun" note to Lord Salisbury. Approved by Cleveland, it invoked the Monroe Doctrine in the controversy and contained this singular assertion: "Today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interpositions."<sup>70</sup>

Four months elapsed without a reply to Secretary Olney's note, and Congress reconvened in a bellicose mood. Senator Cullom, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, key-noted the popular feeling when he declared on the Senate floor in December, "The time has come for a plain, positive declaration of the Monroe Doctrine, and then, if necessary, plain positive enforcement of it against all comers."<sup>71</sup> The public quickly caught the spirit. An ex-Confederate commander wired Cleveland that the American people were a "unit" in favor of "enforcing the Monroe Doctrine" and volunteered his services for war against England. The *Indianapolis Journal* declared: "... when it comes to resisting British aggression, there will be no Republicans and no Democrats. We shall all be Americans, and if Grover Cleveland is President when the crisis comes, we shall all be Cleveland men."<sup>72</sup> Not calculated to pour oil on the troubled waters was the somewhat supercilious reply of Lord Salisbury to the Olney note, received in the second week of December.

It was against such a background that President Cleveland sent his famous special message to Congress, December 17, 1895, in which he called for the appropriation of money for a commission to go to Venezuela and determine the rightful boundary between that country and British Guiana. In short, Cleveland was virtually proposing that the United States draw the boundary line itself and force England to abide by its decision.<sup>73</sup>

War fever ran dangerously high in the United States as jingoism in Congress and in the press had a field day. The New York *Tribune* exulted in a special cable message from London that "Mr. Cleveland has been an English idol but he is now dethroned." According to Godkin, the popular generals, Lew Wallace and O. O. Howard, were "furious for war."<sup>74</sup> Support for the Administration in the crisis was by no means limited to the sensational journals, as a glance at the editorial pages of the New York *Times* and the Springfield *Republican* during the period would prove.<sup>75</sup>

Up to this point Godkin had had little to say about the dispute. It was almost as if the customarily outspoken editor were waiting for opposition to the Administration to crystallize before taking a forthright stand. On December 5, 1895, reporting on the annual message of Cleveland to Congress, the *Nation* had found "nothing of an exciting character in our foreign relations" therein.<sup>76</sup> The next week, December 12, an editorial appeared that was moderately critical of the President's position. The following Thursday, December 19, the *Nation* commented twice on the famous Cleveland message of two days before, once in "The Week," and once in a lengthy Godkin editorial.<sup>77</sup> In each case criticism was relatively mild. Of what transpired immediately thereafter to change the editor's mind and steel him for his frontal assault on the President the next week, he and his associates gave the following exaggerated account on December 26:

... on Friday and Saturday [Cleveland] was overwhelmed with the execrations of business men; on Sunday he received the most unanimous and crushing rebuke that the pulpit of the country ever addressed to a President. He made his appeal to the conscience of the mob; he has now heard from the conscience of the God-fearing people, and their judgment upon him leaves him morally impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors.<sup>78</sup>

Whatever the past indifference of Godkin to Administration handling of the Venezuelan question, he now made up for it with a vengeance. Taking the assertions quoted above for his

text, he devoted seven pages — some 10,000 words — of the December 26 edition of the *Nation* to a scorching attack on the Administration for its course of action. Cleveland's message, cried Godkin and his associates, was a "dishonorable and traitorous attempt to imperil peace," a "betrayal of the nation," and a "mad appeal to the basest passions of the mob." "Was there ever such another case," they demanded, "of a civilized man throwing away his clothes and joining the howling savages?"<sup>79</sup>

Mr. Cleveland says now just what Debs said in the summer of 1894. Law or no law, Debs and his fellow-anarchists gloried in being "masters of the situation." It is a melancholy thing to find the President who put them down with a firm hand, now displaying himself as the greatest international anarchist of modern times.<sup>80</sup>

Grover Cleveland's dislike for newspapers has seldom been equalled among American Presidents.<sup>81</sup> Ironically, it was from the pen of the man whom he had trusted almost alone among editors, who had applauded his stand for "sound" money and had cheered when he "preserved the national credit and saved the country from repudiation," that the bitterest denunciation of him now flowed. The heretofore "unexciting" annual message of three weeks earlier was re-examined and Cleveland statements therein pronounced to be "ignorant and reckless" and "criminal-rash and insensate."<sup>82</sup> Not the least of the crimes of the Chief Executive, declared Godkin, was that he had flung his "terrible firebrand" into "a body of idle, ignorant, lazy, and not very scrupulous men." That "brutish" body (Congress) had responded by surrendering its war-making power to the President "without a word of deliberation or remonstrance." If Cleveland "began hostilities to-morrow, a wild yell of patriotic fervor is all that he would hear from either branch of Congress."<sup>83</sup>

To Godkin everything, even patriotism, had its price tag. It is no canard to say, as did Harry T. Peck, that his chief concern in the crisis was the danger which it posed to Wall Street securities, or the "money market," as he styled it. Patriot-

ism, Godkin admonished, should not be permitted to interfere with the financial well-being of the country. As he wrote:

. . . no people in the world show more sanity, not to say shrewdness, than Americans. Every financial transaction . . . is based on a perfect knowledge of human nature. . . . The total failure of this sense in international matters goes far to confirm the belief of a great many people that the "patriotism" which has been diffused among the masses during the past thirty years, and even taught to the children in the schools, is a species of madness.<sup>84</sup>

The aftermath is well known. Voices less strident than that of Godkin, the true voices of moderation, finally made themselves heard above the din. Overheated pro-British editors and frenetic patriots alike subsided before expressions of good will from both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>85</sup> Cleveland achieved his purpose, the stock market recovered, Venezuela eventually got Point Barima, and Godkin looked for new editorial "rows," as he affectionately called them, in which to engage.

How significant was Godkin's role in the controversy? On December 29, 1895, just after the crisis had passed its peak, he wrote to his old friend Charles Eliot Norton, telling him that his course had "proved the greatest success I have ever had and ever known in journalism." "We were literally overwhelmed with laudatory and congratulatory letters, as well as oral applause of every description, and our circulation rose 1,000 a day." Paradoxically, elsewhere in the lengthy letter but on the same subject, he commented, with a similar pride of achievement: "I am just now the great object of abuse, and the abuse is just what you would hear in a bar-room row."<sup>86</sup>

To say that Godkin provided any more than token leadership to the forces of moderation which ultimately prevailed would be in error. His was not the calm, detached voice that was needed to soothe inflamed passions and set the wheels of conciliation in motion. Many level-headed Americans, immune to the public hysteria whipped up by the sensational press, were



nevertheless more than half-convinced of the underlying rectitude of the American position. Godkin, on the other hand, by the uncompromising pro-British position he adopted toward the controversy, laid himself open to the charge of special bias.

## The Passing of an Era

To illustrate amply the hazards of generalizing about Godkin, one need only turn to his writings on war. He is commonly believed to have been a lifelong crusader for international peace, but, like most generalizations about that professional critic, this one, too is subject to qualification. The misconception about his attitude toward war derives partly from his widely reproduced comment, made as he prepared to retire from active journalism in 1899, that he acquired a loathing for armed conflict from the scenes he witnessed as a young man on the battlefields of the Crimea.<sup>1</sup> His contemporary letters do not support that contention.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, he disassociated himself from organized movements for international conciliation. He never lent his name to the international peace movement; he found few words of praise for peace societies.

It is true that Godkin, as an economic determinist, disapproved of anything that was capable of interfering with the operation of the so-called "laws of trade." Wars were no exception. ". . . it was the American government," he once argued, "which first introduced into international relations the practice of negotiating as business men, and not as soldiers."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, in 1893, he ascribed to the Founding Fathers the view that "foreign negotiations were to be conducted with a solemn desire for peace . . . and, above all, with the circumspection and deliberation which would characterize a prudent and honorable business man seeking to take no unfair advantage of others, or to prevent any unfair advantage being taken of him."<sup>4</sup> To Godkin,

declared Harry T. Peck, "no war could be justifiable, because it cost money. No threat of war was ever to be made, because it depreciated the value of stocks and bonds."<sup>5</sup> What specifically appears to have bothered Peck and his contemporaries were Godkin blasts like the following (1896):

Our present Congressmen are the product of thirty years of government by intrigue, concealment, and bribery. . . . Our present Government . . . is simply impossible for a community with an immense system of credit and foreign trade. To have an assembly of breech-clouted warriors, who are daily shaking their tomahawks at all strangers, presiding and legislating for a nation which has a stock exchange and banks in every town, and in which the poorest man is interested in the condition of the money market, is an absurdity. No such regime can last.<sup>6</sup>

But what else did Godkin write on the subject of war? Buried beside such totally misunderstood Godkin utterances as the reputed, ". . . some day the soldier would find himself properly ranked after the hangman,"<sup>7</sup> are statements like these: "It will be a sorrowful day . . . when . . . men come to consider death on the battle-field the greatest of evils, and the human heart will certainly have sadly fallen off when those who stay at home have neither gratitude nor admiration for those who shoulder the musket . . ."<sup>8</sup> And: "Civil and religious tyranny have so debauched the Spanish people that though individually brave they have lost the capacity for combined and protracted effort even in military enterprises, which is one of the highest marks of civilization."<sup>9</sup> And again: "Roman success in war was at bottom grounded on the discipline imposed by severe training in the virtues of civil life."<sup>10</sup>

A major factor in Godkin's success as a publicist and critic was his pretension to complete detachment in his verdicts. Yet his unfortunate penchant for destructive criticism, the virtual "you're damned if you do, damned if you don't" spirit in which he sometimes monitored the contemporary scene, has been remarked on by some of his closest admirers.<sup>11</sup> This irritating

characteristic was conspicuously present in his treatment of international law. When prosecuting a party to a diplomatic controversy, ordinarily the United States, Godkin characteristically rested his case on international law — or as he invariably put it, what “the textbooks say.” In brief, his dependence upon international law was one of his distinctive trademarks, if not indeed one of his major weaknesses, as a controversialist in the field of foreign affairs.

But Godkin was neither so naive nor so complacent as to believe that mere recitation of the textbooks gave force to the law between nations. In 1869, when the *Alabama* controversy was focusing attention on the need for amplification of international usage, he penned an eloquent plea for the codification and strengthening of international law.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, in a criticism of the work of peace societies written the following year, he sensibly urged advocates of peace to stop talking about the horrors of death on the battlefield and set to work to bring about the supremacy of international law.<sup>13</sup> Almost as if in answer to the editor's pleas, there emerged, in the period following the Franco-Prussian War, a renewed emphasis on the codification of international law and the process of arbitration for the settlement of international disputes.<sup>14</sup> What reception did Godkin give to such efforts? His thorough skepticism of their worth was revealed in three editorials written between 1875 and 1885.

In the first of the editorials, written in 1875, Godkin assailed the activities of organizations for the advancement of international law. His thesis — cogently stated as usual, but flatly contradictory of his customary assumptions — was that these organizations were attempting willy-nilly to “reform” something that, for the practical purposes of mankind, did not even exist. He facetiously proposed that the “philosophers and professors” at the Hague turn their talents instead toward the reforming of people. As he wrote:

Now, in ethics it would be at once recognized as somewhat of an absurdity for a body of distinguished clergymen, leading fathers of families, and editors to get together and hold a convention for the study and reform

of morals over the world. Yet there is really much greater reason why this should be done than that a number of jurists and philanthropists should undertake to amend and codify the law of nations.<sup>15</sup>

In brief, Godkin held that "the notion that there is any tendency among nations to submit themselves to an international code, or that if they did they would abide by it, is absurd."<sup>16</sup> Still, in the first diplomatic controversy to claim his attention after this was written, seven months later, Godkin reverted to his customary practice of reciting international law as gospel.<sup>17</sup>

Another agency of international conciliation of which Godkin is frequently described as having been an ardent supporter was arbitration. Generally, however, his support was lukewarm; sometimes, as the following will indicate, it was entirely lacking. In 1878 a mammoth international peace conference was held in Paris. Commenting on it in the *Nation* in November of that year, Godkin flatly condemned peace societies for seeking to establish universal peace by "mechanical contrivances," or, as he explained, by the "creation of courts of arbitration and the draughting of rules for government of disputants when they get angry . . . ."<sup>18</sup> A second example had to do with a dispute between England and Russia raging over Afghanistan in May, 1885. By this time the editor had become a more or less confirmed pessimist. Obviously sharing the view, common in Europe, that war was inevitable,<sup>19</sup> he was singularly inattentive to proposals that the dispute be submitted to arbitration, explaining that the "existing condition of human nature" was dead set against the peaceful settlement of international difficulties.<sup>20</sup>

Why then had there already been successful arbitrations? In most of them, replied Godkin, the stakes had not been high; for example, success in the case of the San Juan boundary dispute had been due to the "smallness and remoteness of the territory in dispute." But what of the epochal *Alabama* arbitration? That, shrugged he, was "largely due to the openly-expressed American determination to retaliate in kind whenever England was engaged in a foreign war." It was not made clear by Godkin how this related to his main theme — that probably a "very large proportion" of the British people would reject arbitration with



Russia for no other reason than that it had "not been preceded by extensive human slaughter, the burning of large numbers of merchantmen, and the wasting of great tracts of country by fire and sword."<sup>21</sup>

The dispute was successfully arbitrated in spite of Godkin's predictions.

## II

Godkin, as the Roosevelt correspondence shows, penetrated the none-too-tough skin of Theodore Roosevelt as did no other editor. The high-spirited Rough Rider was in established company when he opined that the editor of the *Evening Post* was "not a patriotic man."<sup>22</sup> Godkin had been called "un-American" almost from the day the first number of the *Nation* came out in New York in 1865. Even the sophisticated Springfield *Republican* had taken offence when, in 1869, the *Nation* editorially sneered at the "American view" of foreign relations.<sup>23</sup> Never completely American in spirit, according to his critics, and more than a little ashamed of the Ireland of his birth, he chose England for his final resting place. That he was more British than American — an "Anglo-maniac" — was not deemed even by some intellectuals to be a matter for serious debate. Luckily for Godkin, some of their most potent ammunition lay out of reach — hidden in his personal letters. Ever since the memorable voyage of 1889, when he had first experienced the delights of English society,<sup>24</sup> he had been spending increasingly large portions of each year in the British Isles. It was from England in the summer of 1897 that he justified to his friend Arthur C. Sedgwick his intention of permanently quitting the United States:

There are many things [about England] which reconcile me to America, but there is no country in the world to-day in which you can be very happy if you care about politics and the progress of mankind, while there are many in which you can be very comfortable, if you occupy yourself simply with gardening, lawn tennis and true religion. [England] is one of them. I think I could prepare for heaven far more easily here than in America.<sup>25</sup>

The militantly pro-British position Godkin adopted in the Venezuelan crisis of 1895 had been only one of the more obvious signs of the disaffection which was eventually to culminate in his expatriation. It was during that crisis that an old enemy, the *New York Sun*, exulted:

People who could stand in ordinary times the dismal egotism and unrelieved snarl and sneer of Godkin's editorial manifestations refused absolutely to tolerate him when he turned his pen to defamation of the American flag and abuse of all that American patriotism holds dearest. The most hardened readers of the *Evening Post* were ashamed to be seen in public places with that sheet in their hands. They felt, not without just cause, that they might be suspected of treason to the United States government.<sup>26</sup>

Remarks like these, regardless of their source, undoubtedly did nothing to bolster Godkin's faith in or affection for his adopted country. But he was perfectly capable of defending himself. "It is a fixed idea, with a certain class of publicists among us," he shot back at his detractors in 1894, "that in any controversy with a foreign power our own Government shall be supported, whether it is right or wrong. That is to say, that any political adventurer like Blaine, who scrambles into the State Department, is at liberty to get up with foreigners disputes . . . which shall silence completely the conscience and morality of the public . . . ." <sup>27</sup>

In line with his detestation of chauvinism in any form, Godkin frequently bemoaned the currency given to the terms "Good American" and "Americanism."<sup>28</sup> There was one mark of a "Good American," he noted in November, 1893, which never failed: ". . . he is constantly reminding you that he is a 'good American,' and inquiring whether you are. To be a 'good American' quietly and unostentatiously is something he cannot bear, and he is equally unwilling that you should."<sup>29</sup> On another occasion Godkin sought to analyze "Americanism."

It is evidently a state of feeling, but its nature is ascertainable only by observing the things which are done or proposed by persons who declare themselves animated by it . . . . That is to say, 'Americanism,' or 'intense Americanism,' has to be diagnosed, like any abnormal bodily condition, by simple observation.<sup>30</sup>

This empirical approach enabled Godkin to conclude that persons "afflicted with the mental trouble known as 'Americanism' . . . bestow no attention on political problems which do not contain materials for a row with some foreign power, their patriotism being entirely bellicose."<sup>31</sup>

Godkin's contempt for superpatriotism was consistent with his cosmopolitanism and his tendency to hold divided loyalties in diplomatic contests to which the United States and England were a party. Another interesting facet to him — bordering on isolationism — was the aloofness that he frequently displayed toward the outside world. His opposition to the participation of the United States at the Congo Conference in 1884 and to the Pan American project of James G. Blaine in 1889 has been noted. "The United States of America," he advised in 1896, "was founded in order to get a portion of the civilized world out of this Donnybrook fair [Europe], to provide a corner of the earth in which men could live without having constantly enemies to watch and suspect."<sup>32</sup>

As Robert E. Osgood has put it:

Political and social reformers, like Carl Schurz, Moorfield Storey, and E. L. Godkin, and liberal-minded intellectuals, like David Starr Jordan, William James, Charles Eliot Norton, Mark Twain, and William Dean Howells, attributed America's moral prestige, the progress of her democratic government, and her marvelous material development in large part to her relative isolation from the turbulent affairs of European nations. These men were not impressed by Mahan's prophecies. . . . To them the White man's burden meant the ordeal of

governing an ignorant and hostile people, while embroiling the nation in a contest for foreign markets, territorial aggrandizement, and even larger armaments.<sup>33</sup>

Yet the pacifistically inclined Cobden had supported the British navy; why should not his admirer follow a similar course for the United States? The answer is that at first Godkin did. It was a matter of record that, throughout the 1870's and 1880's, he had repeatedly called attention to the wretched condition of the Navy. But by 1896 he had swung around to the view that there

. . . is not in our past the smallest support for the theory that we need a large navy. . . . The use of the navy is to punish people who think we are afraid to fight. . . . In short, when we get our navy and send it round the world in search of imputations on our honor, we shall have launched the United States on that old sea of sin and sorrow and ruffianism on which mankind has tossed since the dawn of history. . . . We shall have abandoned as a failure the greatest experiment any government ever made.<sup>34</sup>

In brief, Godkin believed that the country, in its haste to make up for its past neglect of the Navy, had in the 1890's gone overboard — to put it mildly. An illustration of this was furnished by an editorial which he wrote in 1892 attacking "navalism." Emphasizing that he did not mean to "use these considerations as an argument against the creation of a navy of the modern sort," he charged that the foreign relations of the country had virtually been turned over "to the Admirals and Captains and Lieutenant-Commanders of our new navy . . ." In short: "Our State Department has been practically abolished, and its Manuals of Instruction and the text-books on International Law are being used as fuel to get up steam. What a situation for the country of Webster and Lincoln and Seward and Marcy and Fish and Evarts!"<sup>35</sup>

And of Mahan, Godkin in the same year wrote:  
We believe the theory on which much of Captain Mahan's advocacy of a great navy is based, that the world contains a great many thrones, principalities, and powers only too ready to insult, revile, trample on, and annoy the United States if they can get a chance to do so with impunity, is the hallucination of an able man who has devoted himself too long and too deeply to a single topic.<sup>36</sup>

Mahan was "deliberately misleading the public," asserted Godkin in 1893, when he said he was "not seeking a navy equal to the British." "Capt. Mahan and a great many of his comrades do desire, and mean to get it if they can, the largest and most powerful navy ever seen, and they want it not for reviews or parades, but to fight somebody."<sup>37</sup>

### III

The rest of the Godkin story — of his attempt to halt the insensate rush into war with Spain in 1898, his participation in the unsuccessful fight to prevent the retention of the Philippine Islands, his final utter disillusionment with the United States and his expatriation to England — is well known.<sup>38</sup> Less known is that, during these events which in two short years catapulted the United States into the front rank of world powers, Godkin took an editorial back seat to his associates.

By 1898 Godkin had lost much of his old fire and zest for combat. Dogged increasingly by chronic rheumatism, which kept him virtually immobilized for days at a time, he was working and writing less each year.<sup>39</sup> Never much of an administrator, the anecdote told of him not long after he joined the *Evening Post* — "I see no one until two, and at two I go home" — came increasingly to apply. Then there were the long vacation periods in Europe, during which he wrote virtually nothing. It was not so much his as it was the scorching pen of his subordinate and pupil, Rollo Ogden, that moved a harassed William McKinley in 1898 to consider charging the *Evening Post* with treason.<sup>40</sup>



In December, 1899, Godkin privately sought to account for at least one aspect of his decreased activity. To one of his numerous lady admirers, Louise Dawson, he wrote:

I do not like to talk about the Boer war, it is too painful. . . . When I do speak of [it] my language becomes unfit for publication. . . . Talking of the Philippine war has the same effect upon me, and I have therefore ceased to write about McKinley. Every one who believes in the divine government of the world must believe that God will eventually take up the case of fellows who set unnecessary wars on foot, and I hope he won't forgive them.<sup>41</sup>

Editorially, a thoroughly embittered Godkin found time to call for a national referendum on imperialism.<sup>42</sup> "We have not, no thinking man has," he declared in December, 1898, "the smallest doubt how this 'imperialist' movement will end. The history of America under it will, in all human probability, be that of a calamity greater by far than the fall of the Roman Empire . . . ."<sup>43</sup> Again privately he complained to a friend, this time to Emily Tuckerman: "The one thing which will prevent expansion being a disgrace, is a permanent colonial civil service, but who is doing a thing or saying a word about it? No one that I can hear of."<sup>44</sup> The next month he amplified these views for public consumption in an article in *Forum*.<sup>45</sup>

Godkin had not exaggerated to Miss Dawson his feelings about McKinley in 1899.<sup>46</sup> It had been quite the other way around in 1898, in the few tension-packed weeks before the outbreak of war with Spain, when, as Allan Nevins has pointed out, Godkin had praised the President in one column while damning Congress in the other.<sup>47</sup> There were no hearts-and-flowers in his editorial comment of February, 1899, that McKinley had come out of the Spanish war "drunk with glory and flattery," or, later, in his memorable indictment of the President for murder.<sup>48</sup> It required, in short, nothing less than complete physical collapse, in February, 1900, to take from the sixty-nine-year-old Godkin his ambition "to express by anticipation the judgment of posterity on McKinley . . . ."<sup>49</sup>

Nor did Godkin overlook the clergy in his editorial strictures. In his eyes the church shared a heavy responsibility with McKinley for the atrocities committed in the Philippines.<sup>50</sup> The lurid accounts Godkin gave of fiendish cruelties by American soldiers there rivalled those of the activities of the Spanish in Cuba with which Americans had been made so familiar by the yellow press. He searched the Judeo-Christian canons of morality for something which would justify the use of bayonets to "civilize" the natives of Luzon, and, finding nothing, he encouraged the Filipino rebels to fight on.<sup>51</sup> Domestically the contest was at its hottest when, on March 16, 1899, he asserted in the *Nation* that the United States had "not a particle of claim to [Filipino] allegiance except what is based on a bogus purchase from a bankrupt vendor . . ."<sup>52</sup>

Having said these and a few more equally cogent things, Godkin departed for Europe and, as it developed, to unofficial retirement in May, 1899. To the wife of Lord Bryce he wrote in November, 1899:

I am on the whole not sorry for your experience [the Boer War]. You now know what we have been through, seeing a perfectly avoidable war forced on by a band of unscrupulous politicians, the permission of whom to exist and flourish on the part of the Almighty always puzzles me; and behind them a roaring mob. . . . We are dragging wearily in the old way, killing half a dozen Filipinos every week, and continually "near the end." The folly of ignorance and rascality we are displaying in the attempt to conquer and have "subjects" would disgrace a trades union. You do not see a quarter of it in England.<sup>53</sup>

At the bottom of and responsible for those developments, Godkin found, was an "immense democracy, mostly ignorant" and fed by a "villainous press."<sup>54</sup> It was in the war with Spain that his mounting fury against sensationalism in journalism boiled over and left him, to use the words of Walter Millis, "reduced to helpless rage." Of the behavior of the yellow journals, notably the *New York World* (Pulitzer) and the *Journal*

(Hearst), before and during the conflict, the following quotations from the *Nation* and the *Evening Post* are descriptive:

On February 24, 1898, nine days after the sinking of the *Maine*:

Nothing so disgraceful as the behavior of two of these newspapers in the past week has ever been known in the history of American journalism.<sup>55</sup>

On March 3, with events in the dispute moving to a fateful climax:

Certainly if ever the ministry feels itself called upon to withstand the active powers of darkness, the need of opposing and exposing the diabolical newspapers which are trying to lie the country into war must be obvious.<sup>56</sup>

Two weeks later, unimpressed by the Senate speech of Senator Proctor of Vermont describing the civilian suffering he witnessed in the Spanish *reconcentrados* in Cuba:

No one — absolutely no one — supposes a yellow journal cares five cents about the Cubans, the *Maine* victims, or anyone else. A yellow journal is probably the nearest approach to hell, existing in any Christian state.<sup>57</sup>

On May 5 appeared in the *Nation* the famous editorial in which Godkin charged that the multitude had established in the United States a "régime in which a blackguard boy with several millions of dollars at his disposal [William Randolph Hearst] has more influence on the use a great nation may make of its credit, of its army and navy, of its name and traditions, than all the statesmen and philosophers and professors in the country."<sup>58</sup>

#### IV

When Godkin, his health broken, retired from the journalistic wars in November, 1899 (officially January 1, 1900), he did not drop his pen overnight. From England he continued through letters to fulminate against the New Liberalism, imperialism, and any theory of political economy which did not corre-

spond to the *laissez faire* and "peace, retrenchment, and reform" slogans of the mid-Victorian British Liberals.<sup>59</sup> Like William Graham Sumner, he was fated to die in his enemies' day.<sup>60</sup> But though the times were, sadly for him, even more than usual out of joint, one suspects he privately took comfort in that added excuse to be out of step. He died in England, May 21, 1902, disillusioned with America and with representative government, convinced that his life's work had been in vain.

The world in 1900 was probably the better for Godkin's having lived in it. Impulsive, hypercritical, and intolerant though he sometimes was, his volatile pen may have had a distinct sobering effect on an age that needed forcefully to be reminded of its shortcomings (albeit some of them, said Rutherford B. Hayes, "are not what the *Nation* supposes").<sup>61</sup>

As the ablest and most influential of the Brahmin critics of American foreign and domestic policy between 1865 and 1900, Edwin Lawrence Godkin left an imprint on the reporting of the period which subsequent historical scholarship has not erased. A Godkin admirer and former *Evening Post* staff member, Allan Nevins, has written of that paper and its editor: "Its dignity, integrity, scholarly accuracy, pride of intellect, and above all incisiveness, were the reflection of Godkin's own traits."<sup>62</sup> Against such a sharply defined background, Nevins elsewhere refers to the well-known penchant of Godkin for destructive criticism. He points out, for example, that in each Presidential campaign after 1865 that publicist "printed three editorials attacking the other candidate to every one advocating his own."<sup>63</sup> It is of interest to match against these figures the record of Godkin on American foreign policy. Here the ratio of censure over praise ran much higher — six to one would be a conservative estimate. Whether this indicates that Godkin believed the manner in which opposing Presidential candidates comported themselves was less deserving of censure than the manner in which the country's foreign relations were conducted is purely a matter for conjecture.

In pursuance of the thesis that historians as a rule incline toward taking the writings of Godkin a bit too seriously, considerable stress has necessarily been laid herein on his inconsistencies, though one should beware of unnecessarily compounding these.

While it is true that Godkin was personally responsible for the opinions expressed by the *Nation* and the *Evening Post*, many persons besides him wrote for these papers, their contributions remaining unsigned because of policy. Hence, the editorial "we" applied to everything that, aside from letters by disgruntled readers, made its way into the columns of the two papers. This has encouraged historians to attribute to Godkin things that he did not write.<sup>64</sup> Now that a ready means of identifying contributors to the *Nation* (and to some extent the *Evening Post* as well) has been provided by Daniel C. Haskell, this practice may be expected to stop.<sup>65</sup>

Moreover, it should be stressed that personal journalism does not necessarily promote editorial consistency. This would especially be the case where, with Godkin, it was pursued at the rate of three or four thousand words a week over a thirty-five-year period. Followers of another unpredictable journalist, Horace Greeley, were forcefully reminded of that fact by the Republicans in the Presidential campaign of 1872. In short, some of Godkin's inconstancy must be laid to the pressures of that stern editorial taskmaster, the deadline. In his overeagerness to expose sin and corruption in whatever guise it might conceivably appear at the moment, he did not always take the time needed to separate the kernel from the hull.

Stylistically and in other ways much of the writing of Godkin remains as pertinent and fresh as if it were written yesterday. When he was at his best, he could not be matched for the logic, clarity, and incisive humor of his utterances. As for the rather disturbing amount of personal invective in his editorials, this should astonish no one who is familiar with other journals of his day. True, Godkin failed to live up to the exalted editorial standards by which he measured others in his profession, but it should be remembered that his day was yet to a considerable extent one of personal journalism — of Horace Greeley, Charles A. Dana, and William Cullen Bryant. Few if any of these men ever reached the depths — Dana frequently tried — plumbed by such savants of the sewer as Parson W. G. Brownlow ("Down-low," as his adversaries called him) of the Knoxville *Whig*. But they all were prone to say things about their contemporaries



that if uttered today would provoke physical retaliation. Working in such a climate, Godkin, who was more responsible than most, could hardly be expected not to be conversant with their methods.

At the same time, the narrow conservatism in which Godkin wrapped himself in his later years can hardly be accounted a force for good. His disciples were, for the most part, men of great talent. The needs of the times required that their mental horizons be constantly broadened. The achievements of later nineteenth-century science and industry, solid though they were, were purchased at the expense of creating a multitude of new problems in human relationships — problems that cried urgently for solution. Godkin lacked the expanded intellectual outlook that the times demanded.

# Notes

## NOTES CHAPTER ONE

1. Harry T. Peck, "Mr. Godkin and His Book," *Bookman*, II (1896), 483.
2. Oswald G. Villard, *Some Newspapers and Newspapermen* (New York, 1923), pp. 292-293. Cf. *Nation*, Dec. 21, 1865, p. 769.
3. "Private and Public Morality," *Nation*, Oct. 25, 1894, p. 298.
4. James Creelman, "Joseph Pulitzer — Master Journalist," *Pearson's Magazine*, XXI (1909), 246.
5. Henry S. Commager, *The American Mind* (New Haven, 1950), p. 313.
6. On the Saturday Club see W. R. Thayer, "Edwin L. Godkin" in M. A. DeWolfe Howe, *Later Years of the Saturday Club* (New York, 1927), pp. 187-196, and George F. Hoar, *Autobiography* (New York, 1906), pp. 422-425. For the Adams quote see *The Education of Henry Adams* (New York, 1918), p. 328. Hereafter cited as Adams, *Autobiography*.
7. Godkin to Smith, date not specified, as quoted in Rollo Ogden, ed., *Life and Letters of Edwin Lawrence Godkin* (New York, 1907), II, 112. Hereafter cited as Ogden. Cf. *ibid.*, I, 318; II, 43, 112; C. S. Gleed, "Mr. Godkin on the West: A Protest," *Forum*, XXI (1896), 144; W. A. Russ, Jr., "Godkin Looks at Western Agrarianism," *Journal of Agricultural History*, XIX (1945), 233.
8. James F. Rhodes, *Historical Essays* (New York, 1909), p. 279.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 280-282. Cf. Harvey Cushing, "James Ford Rhodes," in Howe, *op. cit.*, p. 349, and M. A. DeWolfe Howe, *James Ford Rhodes* (New York, 1929), pp. 45, 154, 160, 165, 168-172.
10. William Allen White, *Autobiography* (New York, 1946), pp. 144-145, 213.
11. Phelps to Godkin, date not specified, Ogden, II, 67.
12. Lowell to Godkin, July 16, 1874, *ibid.*, 88.
13. James Bryce, *Studies in Contemporary Biography* (London, 1903), pp. 372-373; Eliot to Godkin, Nov. 30, 1899, Ogden, II, 232.
14. Henry James, ed., *Letters of William James* (Boston, 1920), I, 284. But for a less glowing appraisal of Godkin by the same writer, see William James to Henry James, Jr., May 12, 1889 and April 22, 1896. *James Papers*, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

15. Stedman to Lowell, Feb. 2, 1866, cited in Laura Stedman and G. M. Gould, *The Life and Letters of Edmund Clarence Stedman* (New York, 1910), I, 370; R. T. Ely, "The Founding and Early History of the American Economic Association," *American Economic Review*, *Sup.* (March, 1936), p. 143; J. W. Burgess, *Reminiscences of an American Scholar* (New York, 1934), p. 253; Henry Adams, *Autobiography*, pp. 280, 336; Brander Matthews, *These Many Years* (New York, 1917), pp. 170-175; H. T. Peck, *Twenty Years of the Republic, 1885-1905* (New York, 1920), pp. 439-444; L. F. Abbott, ed., *The Letters of Major Archie Butt* (New York, 1924), p. 71. Cf. Roosevelt to Morley, Dec. 1, 1908, in E. E. Morison, ed., *Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, 1951), VI, 1400, and *passim*; Allan Nevins, *The Evening Post* (New York, 1922), p. 450.

16. *Ogden*, II, 67, 69, 171. Van Wyck Brooks attempts to recreate some of the spirit of Godkin's crusade in *New England: Indian Summer* (New York, 1940), p. 116.

17. Upton Sinclair, *American Outpost* (New York, 1932), p. 63. See also by the same author, *The Brass Check* (Pasadena, 1920), pp. 15, 22. For Lincoln Steffens' adverse estimate of Godkin, see *Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens* (New York, 1931), pp. 172, 179, 180.

18. Villard, *Some Newspapers and Newspapermen*, p. 282.

19. The most extensive recent treatments of the English origins of Godkin's thought are by V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought* (New York, 1930), III, 154-168; and Allan Nevins, "E. L. Godkin: Victorian Liberal," *Nation*, July 22, 1950, pp. 76-79. Cf. *Nation*, W. P. Garrison, "Edwin Lawrence Godkin," May 22, 1902, pp. 403-404; and A. V. Dicey, "An English Scholar's Appreciation of Godkin," July 8, 1915, pp. 51-52. For primary material see Godkin's fragmentary memoirs in *Ogden*, I, 11; his letters in *ibid.*, I, 243; II, 45, 85, 237; and the following *Nation* editorials: "Sweetness and Light," Sept. 12, 1867, pp. 212-213; "Puritanism in Politics," Oct. 3, 1867, pp. 275-276; "John Stuart Mill," May 22, 1873, pp. 350-351; "A Great Revelation," March 5, 1891, pp. 190-191. See also unidentified writings in *Nation*, I, 147, 180, 260, 278, 418; II, 22, 26, 129, 147, 417, 598, 706; III, 69, 383, 406, 473; IV, 22, 260, 266, 374, 447; V, 65, 207, 237, 368, 372, 495.

20. Edwin L. Godkin, *The History of Hungary and the Magyars* (London, 1853).

21. Henry Holt, *Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor* (New York, 1923), p. 293. Cf. *Ogden*, II, 141-163.

22. *Ogden*, II, 237. Cf. Villard, *op. cit.*, p. 282, and Bryce, *Studies*, p. 367. Villard and Bryce are unreliable on Godkin, however.

23. See *Ogden*, I, 118-164.

24. She died in 1875. Godkin was remarried, to Katherine Sands, in 1884. She and a son by his first marriage, Lawrence, survived him. *Ogden*, I, 170; II, 107, 128.

25. Nevins, *The Evening Post*, p. 318.

26. August Maverick, *Henry J. Raymond and the New York Press for Thirty Years* (Hartford, 1870), pp. 124, 221.

27. See letter of Godkin in Justin McCarthy and Sir John R. Robinson, *The "Daily News" Jubilee* (London, 1896), pp. 69-77.

28. Rhodes, *Historical Essays*, p. 273.

29. Conversation with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., August 19, 1953. For additional confirmation of this, see Allan Nevins and M. H. Thomas, eds., *The Diary of George Templeton Strong* (New York, 1952), I, 325, 327. For Godkin's role, see Detmold to Bancroft, May 9, 1865. *Atkinson Papers*, Massachusetts State Historical Society.

30. There is a difference of opinion on this. It is sufficient to say that the format of the *Nation* closely resembled that of the ultra conservative *Saturday Review*, while its politics were nearer those of the *Spectator*.

31. Royal Cortissoz, *The Life of Whitelaw Reid* (New York, 1921), I, 137-138. Edward Cary, *George William Curtis* (New York, 1894), pp. 189-192. Emerson was one of those who opposed Godkin.

32. *Ogden*, I, 237. A recent writer has correctly noted that in launching the *Nation* its editor "offered no statement of policy or program, hope or faith." (Beulah Amidon, "The *Nation* and the *New Republic*," *Survey Graphic*, XXIX (1940), 22. But, while it is true that nothing of the sort appeared in the *Nation*, the prospectus must have been made available to the initial subscribers.

33. Among other things, Godkin wrote that it was the intent of the *Nation* to gather information "as to the condition and prospects of the Southern States, the openings they offer to capital, and the supply and kind of labor which can be obtained in them." *Ogden*, I, 238. Cf. *Nation*, July 13, 1865, p. 63; Aug. 17, 1865, p. 199.

34. Bryce, *Studies*, p. 372. Cf. correspondence in *Ogden*, I, 306. This policy of anonymity was responsible for some amusing misunderstandings. For a particularly delightful one—it shows, incidentally, how tactless and meddlesome Godkin could be—see Evelyn Page, "The Man Around the Corner," *New England Quarterly*, XXIII (1950), 401, and Harold Cater, *Henry Adams and his Friends* (Boston, 1947), pp. 96, 102-103, 105. Cf. *Nation*, Feb. 1, 1866, p. 129. On the same subject the flattering Lowell wrote Godkin: "Every Friday morning, when the *Nation* comes, I fill my pipe and read it from beginning to end. Do you do it all yourself? Or are there really so many clever men in the country?" Lowell to Godkin, Sept. 25, 1866, *Ogden*, II, 74.

35. Arthur Sedgwick, "The 'Nation's' Critics," *Nation*, July 8, 1915, p. 54. For additional comment on Sedgwick, see Chapter VII herein.

36. Sedgwick, *loc. cit.* Cf. Godkin to Norton, Dec. 3, 1874, *Ogden*, I, 308; Daniel C. Haskell, comp., *The Nation: Index of Contributors* (New York, 1953). Hereafter cited as *Nation Index: Contributors*.

37. *Nation Index: Contributors*; Gustave Pollak, ed., *Fifty Years of American Idealism: The New York Nation, 1865-1915* (New York, 1915), p. 17; Mrs. Henry James to Alice James, August 25, 1872 (?), and Henry James, Sr. to Henry James, Jr., April 27, 1869. *James Papers*, Harvard.

38. See J. H. McDaniels, comp. *Letters and Memorials of Wendell Phillips Garrison* (Cambridge, 1908); Fabian Franklin, *People and Problems* (New York, 1908), p. 183; Rollo Ogden, "Wendell Phillips Garrison," *Nation*,

March 7, 1907, pp. 217-219. The *Lounsbury Papers*, Yale University Library, and the *Lea Papers*, Lea Library, University of Pennsylvania, are a mine of information on Garrison's methods of dealing with contributors.

39. *Ogden*, II, 51-52.

40. See entries in *Nation Index: Contributors*.

41. Godkin and Garrison were in the habit of circularizing subscribers for contributions. See McDaniels, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

42. See E. P. Oberholtzer, *A History of the United States since the Civil War* (New York, 1917-1937), II, III, IV, V, *passim*.

43. See *Nation Index: Contributors*.

44. Quoted in Charles F. Wingate, ed., *Views and Interviews on Journalism* (New York, 1875), p. 211. *Cf. Nation*, March 19, 1868, p. 228.

45. Wingate, *op. cit.*

46. Villard, *Some Newspapers and Newspapermen*, p. 295; *Bookman*, X (1900), 410.

47. *Ogden*, II, 54; Joseph B. Bishop, *Notes and Anecdotes of Many Years* (New York, 1925), p. 98; *Nation*, Jan. 11, 1866, p. 33; Jan. 31, 1867, p. 82; May 7, 1868, p. 371.

48. *Nation*, June 24, 1869, p. 490. *Cf. ibid.*, "Opinion-Moulding," Aug. 12, 1869, pp. 126-127; "The Boston Press," March 17, 1892, pp. 206-207; "Journalistic Dementia," March 14, 1895, pp. 195-196. Godkin editorially scoffed at the idea that young journalists should have special training at college in the mechanics of their profession. He would simply have them well-versed in the fields "which every man pretending to be educated ought to cultivate." That meant that at college they would concentrate on the study of history, "legislative science," and political economy. Wingate, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

49. *Ogden*, II, 51.

50. See examples in *Nation*, Jan. 18, 1866, p. 65; Feb. 8, 1866, p. 166; April 23, 1868, p. 327.

51. Godkin to Norton, Feb. 6, 1866, *Ogden*, II, 37.

52. *Ogden*, II, 114. See also "The Negro's Claim to Office," *Nation*, Aug. 1, 1867, p. 90; and *ibid.*, Nov. 14, 1867, p. 396. An excellent appraisal of Godkin's vacillating Negro policy is contained in Alan P. Grimes, *The Political Liberalism of the New York Nation* (Chapel Hill, 1953), pp. 5-12.

53. *Ogden*, II, 50.

54. See *Nation*, "The Impeachment," Oct. 18, 1866, p. 310; "The Result of the Trial," May 21, 1868, p. 404; "The Executive Legislating," April 5, 1866, p. 423; "The End At Last," May 19, 1870, p. 314; "Police Duty," April 27, 1871, pp. 284-285; "The Law and the Facts in Louisiana," Jan. 14, 1875, p. 20. *Cf. ibid.*, March 1, 1866, p. 262; Aug. 9, 1866, p. 110; Sept. 20, 1866, p. 233.

55. Roger W. Shugg, "The Liberal Ideology and Reconstruction." Paper read at a joint session of the American Historical Association and the Southern Historical Association at Chicago, c. Dec. 29, 1953.

56. *Nation*, Jan. 16, 1868, p. 42. *Cf. ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1867, p. 210; Sept. 26, 1867, p. 245; April 23, 1868, p. 326.



57. See *ibid.*, June 25, 1868, pp. 505, 507, 510. Just how badly Godkin miscalculated on Grant is evident when one contrasts his glowing inaugural editorial of March 4, 1869, with the later one he wrote on October 28, 1875.

58. See *ibid.*, May 30, 1872, p. 349. For light on Godkin's role in the stop-Grant movement, see Godkin to Atkinson, May 29, 1872. *Atkinson Papers*, Massachusetts State Historical Society.

59. Nevins, *The Evening Post*, p. 398.

60. See the account of Brander Matthews in *These Many Years*, and Godkin editorials in *Nation*, "The Political Situation," Dec. 14, 1876, p. 350; "The Fraud Investigation," May 30, 1878, p. 353. See also *ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1877, p. 112.

61. Godkin to Norton, date not specified, *Ogden*, I, 290. Cf. *ibid.*, II, 91. In early years Godkin regarded William M. Evarts as one of the greatest of American Secretaries of State.

62. For Hayes' hostile reaction to this, see entry in *Hayes Diary*, July 11, 1880, as quoted in C. R. Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Rutherford B. Hayes* (Columbus, 1922-1926), III, 609. Cf. *ibid.*, March 11, 1881, IV, 3.

63. Garfield to Hinsdale, May 20, 1878, as quoted in Theodore C. Smith, *Life and Letters of James A. Garfield* (New Haven, 1925), II, 719. Cf. B. A. Hinsdale, *The Works of James A. Garfield* (Boston, 1882), I, 639. Garfield had once been on good terms with Godkin. See their correspondence in *Garfield Papers*, Library of Congress.

64. *Nation*, June 17, 1880, p. 445. On the campaign see Godkin editorials in *ibid.*, "The Democratic Letters," Aug. 5, 1880, pp. 88-89; "General Hancock's Escapade on the Tariff," Oct. 21, 1880, pp. 283-284; "The Morey Letter Case," Nov. 18, 1880, pp. 352-354.

65. See *ibid.*, Sept. 22, 1881, p. 228; Sept. 29, 1881, p. 241; Oct. 20, 1881, p. 301. These writings reflect the *tone* of the *Nation*, but were not necessarily the work of Godkin.

66. See O. G. Villard, "The *Nation* and its Ownership," *ibid.*, July 8, 1915, p. 53; Garrison to Mrs. Godkin, Jan. 1, 1895, *Ogden*, II, 180; Garrison to Thayer, Dec. 13, 1904, as quoted in McDaniels, *Letters and Memorials*, p. 53. Although Villard is as accurate as are some historians on Godkin, his ignorance of the man with whom he worked seems inexcusable. For instance, he says without qualification that Godkin "made no speeches." (Oswald G. Villard, *Fighting Years; Memoirs of a Liberal Editor* [New York, 1939], p. 120). For a first-hand account of some of the highlights of Godkin's "ignoble oratorical career," as he called it, see his letters in *Ogden*, I, 110; II, 70, 95, 96, 180, 184. Cf. Godkin, *Henry G. Pearson: A Memorial Address* (New York, 1894), privately printed; Godkin, Address to 3d Annual Convention, American Institute of Architects, Nov. 17, 1869, in *American Institute of Architects. Proceedings*. (1870).

67. See Henry Villard, *Memoirs* (Boston, 1904), II, 338, and Godkin to Villard, June 21 (n. y.). *Villard Papers*, Harvard.

68. See *Nation*, Jan. 26, 1867, p. 72; Jan. 31, 1867, p. 102; June 13, 1867, p. 475; June 20, 1867, p. 486; Sept. 26, 1867, p. 246. During the Civil War the *Evening Post* supported the Radical faction in the Union party. This group,

to which Schurz belonged, wanted the war prosecuted without compromise or regard for the feelings of the border states and northern Democrats. But soon after Appomattox the *Post* found itself in the opposite camp, supporting Johnson's mild reconstruction policy. In this the *Evening Post* differed both with Schurz and with the *Nation*, which was at first considered to be an organ of the Radical press. See Nevins, *The Evening Post*, pp. 327-329. In 1867 Godkin referred to Charles Nordhoff, the liberal managing editor of the *Evening Post*, as an "ignorant red." Godkin to Norton, Sept. 22, 1867, *Ogden*, I, 302.

69. Nevins, *The Evening Post*, pp. 394-400.

70. See Frederic Bancroft and William A. Dunning, eds., *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz* (New York, 1907-1908), pp. 400-402.

71. *Nation*, Aug. 21, 1879, p. 128.

72. See Chapter V herein.

73. Cited in *Nation*, Feb. 21, 1884, p. 154.

74. For an outstanding example of Godkin's genius for combining wit with invective, see "The Mind and Manners of the Silver-Man," *ibid.*, Feb. 7, 1878, p. 91.

75. See Adams to Godkin, date not specified, *Ogden*, II, 127. Godkin regarded sentiment as the worst vice of his profession. But, as he proved on a number of occasions, he was not immune to it himself. See Godkin to Howells, date not specified, *ibid.*, I, 306; Godkin to Miss Brace, Dec. 12, 1894, *ibid.*, II, 193.

76. Isaac Bromley. Cited in Nevins, *The Evening Post*, p. 454.

77. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 456. Cf. Godkin editorials reprinted in *Nation*, "The Last Stage of the Strike," Aug. 9, 1883, p. 110; "The Strike and the Monopoly," Aug. 16, 1883, pp. 132-133; "Why the Strike Failed," Aug. 23, 1883, p. 156.

78. Cited in Nevins, *op. cit.*, pp. 455-456.

79. Godkin, "The Prospects of the Political Art," *North American Review*, CX, 398; Godkin, "Idleness and Immorality," *Forum*, XII (1892), 341; Edward C. Kirkland, *Business in the Gilded Age: the Conservatives' Balance Sheet* (Madison, 1952), p. 24; Villard, *Fighting Years*, p. 119; Godkin to Norton, April 13, 1865, *Ogden*, II, 48; Parrington, *Main Currents*, III, 160.

80. Nevins, *op. cit.*, p. 456.

81. Bryce, *Studies*, p. 365. Fabian Franklin, an editor of the *Baltimore News*, asserted that the *Nation* absorbed the *Evening Post*. Franklin, *People and Problems*, p. 184.

82. There is a considerable literature bearing on this point. Much of it is contradictory. See particularly Melville E. Stone, *Fifty Years a Journalist* (New York, 1921), p. 217; C. C. Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard* (New York, 1940), pp. viii, xix, xx, 142, 272, 273, 274, 652; *Ogden*, II, 126; *Nation*, May 22, 1902, p. 403.

83. Godkin to Bryce, Oct. 17, 1884, *Ogden*, II, 135. See in *Nation* the following Godkin editorials: "The Blaine Boom," April 10, 1884, pp. 310-311; "Vindication," April 24, 1884, pp. 358-359; "The True Cause of the

Trouble," July 24, 1884, pp. 67-68; "An Unfortunate Comparison," Aug. 21, 1884, pp. 150-151; "Keep My Name Quiet," Sept. 18, 1884, pp. 237-238; "The Standard of Official Morality," Sept. 18, 1884, p. 238.

84. For Godkin's role in the campaign, see the following *Evening Post* editorials reprinted in *ibid.*: "What We Think Of It Now," Aug. 7, 1884, pp. 106-107; "More Of It," Aug. 21, 1884, p. 150; "The Conscience Vote," Oct. 2, 1884, p. 280; "Cleveland's Independence," Oct. 2, 1884, p. 281. Cf. Nevins, *The Evening Post*, pp. 458-466.

85. "A Great Example," *Nation*, Nov. 10, 1892, p. 346. When Godkin was sued for falsely alleging during the campaign that a Brooklyn clergyman (Blaine supporter) had once been charged with moral turpitude, Cleveland paid half his legal fees. See Godkin to Cleveland, March 30, 1890. *Cleveland Papers*, Library of Congress.

86. See *Nation*, "The Mournful Past," Jan. 8, 1885, pp. 26-27; "Memoranda," March 19, 1885, p. 234; "How the Standard Has Been Raised," March 26, 1885, pp. 254-255; "The President as a Sheikh," April 2, 1885, p. 274; "The President's Critics," April 16, 1885, p. 316; "The Importance of the Finish," April 21, 1887, p. 334; "The One Thing Needful," April 28, 1887, p. 358. Cf. Godkin to Cleveland, Nov. 10, 1885, and Godkin to Stetson, Dec. 16, 1884. *Cleveland Papers*, *loc. cit.*

87. See *ibid.*, July 12, 1888, pp. 24-25; July 19, 1888, p. 45; Aug. 2, 1888, p. 85; Aug. 16, 1888, p. 124; Nov. 8, 1888, p. 368; Nov. 28, 1888, p. 406. For charges by Godkin that Harrison was subsidizing the press by giving political appointments to editors and owners of newspapers, see *ibid.*, April 18, 1889, p. 315; May 2, 1889, p. 355; May 30, 1889, pp. 435-436.

88. Peck, "Mr. Godkin and his Book," p. 486.

89. See Chapter VII herein.

90. "The Gospel of Hatred," *Nation*, Oct. 20, 1892, p. 298. Cf. *ibid.*, "The Meaning of McKinley," March 19, 1896, p. 232; "A Word to Business Men," May 14, 1896, pp. 372-373; "The Bygone Opinions of Public Men," Oct. 8, 1896, pp. 262-263.

91. See *ibid.*, "The Precursors of Peffer," July 2, 1891, pp. 5-6; "Silver-Bugs and Silverolatry," June 29, 1893, p. 466; "The Great 'Conspiracy,'" July 6, 1893, p. 4; "The Great Goddess Argentum," April 12, 1894, pp. 266-267.

92. *Nation*, July 16, 1896, p. 42.

Cf. *ibid.*, p. 40. For adverse comment on Seymour and Tilden a generation earlier in the *Nation*, see *ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1866, p. 201, and May 7, 1868, p. 362.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 42. Cf. Rhodes, *Historical Essays*, p. 284.

94. Villard, *Some Newspapers and Newspapermen*, p. 282. Cf. Bookman, X (1900), 409-411, and Ogden, II, 126.

95. Ogden, II, 127.

96. Peck, "Mr. Godkin and his Book," p. 484. Cf. Godkin editorials in *Nation*, "Partisan Virtue," April 25, 1895, p. 318; "The Republican Tweedledum and the Democratic Tweedledee," May 3, 1894, p. 322; "Must the Republican Party Disband?" Oct. 14, 1897, pp. 292-293; and *ibid.*, May 9, 1867, p. 374.

97. Cited in Nevins, *The Evening Post*, p. 542.
98. Henry Adams, *Autobiography*, pp. 280, 336. See also Peck, *Twenty Years of the Republic*, p. 443.
99. See Ogden, II, 25, 199, 215, 220, 237; "The Unfortunate Press," *Nation*, May 7, 1896, pp. 355-356. Godkin's pessimism, contrary to common belief, set in early. In 1865 the *Nation*, in speaking out forthrightly against the eight-hour day, uttered this gloomy prediction: "The time is not far distant when all things will be in common and grass grow in Broadway." In 1890 Godkin praised pessimism as follows: "The optimists in every age have as a whole filled the jails and the almshouses, or lived on the bounty of their gloomier friends and relatives." "Optimists and Pessimists," *ibid.*, July 24, 1890, p. 64. For interesting private comment on Godkin's pessimism, see Henry James, Sr., to Jane Norton, May 28, 1871 (?); Henry James, Sr. to Henry James, Jr., Aug. 8, 1873; Henry James, Jr. to William James, Aug. 7, 1897; William James to Henry James, Sept. 3, 1899. *James Papers*, Harvard.
100. Rhodes, *Historical Essays*, p. 277. Cf. Godkin, "English and American Ministers," *Nation*, March 9, 1882, pp. 200-201.
101. *Bookman*, II, (1895), 93. Against this was the story of the timid old lady who, living alone in the country, was always relieved to hear the thud of the *Evening Post* on her porch at dusk — "it just lay there and growled all night." Cited in Allan Nevins, *American Press Opinion* (New York, 1928), p. 301.
102. See Nevins, *The Evening Post*, pp. 560-562.
103. Rhodes, *Essays*, p. 282; Ogden, I, 306; II, 127; *Nation*, June 4, 1868, p. 451; Oct. 10, 1867, p. 299; Garrison to Lounsbury, May 28, 1883. *Lounsbury Papers*, Yale.
104. Peck, "Mr. Godkin and his Book," p. 486; Ogden, II, 169.
105. "A Unique Performance," *Nation*, June 5, 1890, p. 444; "A Blow at the Pirates," *ibid.*, July 3, 1890, pp. 6-7. On the mammoth libel suit which followed, see Nevins, *The Evening Post*, pp. 560-562, and *Nation*, Feb. 23, 1893, p. 135, plus the following correspondence: Ogden to Crary, June 21, 1890; Publisher, *Evening Post*, to Ogden, March 11, 1899; Godkin to Ogden, n.d. (1899); Ogden to Call, April 11, 1899; Gray to Wanamaker, April 14, 1899; Wanamaker to Ogden, April 15, 1899; Ogden to Parkhurst, April 17, 1899; ? to Ogden, April 18, 1899. *Robert C. Ogden Business Letters*, Library of Congress.
106. Peck, *loc. cit.*, p. 485. For the official views of Godkin on international copyright, see his editorials in *Nation*, "Who Owns an Author's Ideas," June 27, 1867, pp. 520-522; "International Copyright," Nov. 9, 1871, pp. 301-302; "The Working of the Copyright Bill," March 19, 1891, pp. 233-234.
107. Godkin to Norton, July 28, 1870, Ogden, II, 62; Godkin to Schurz, May 19, 1872, as quoted in Frederic Bancroft, ed., *Speeches, Correspondence, and Political Papers of Carl Schurz* (New York, 1913), II, 376; Godkin to Tilton, Sept. 7, 1868; Godkin to Tilton, Sept. 15 (n. y.). MSS letters in New York Public Library. See also Ogden, I, 292-293, II, 34, 53; "Opinion-Moulding," *Nation*, Aug. 12, 1869, pp. 126-127; Bishop, *Anecdotes*, p. 92.
108. Bryce, *Studies*, p. 375.



109. Nevins, *The Evening Post*, p. 546.
110. Henry F. Pringle, "Godkin of 'The Post,'" *Scribner's Magazine*, XCVI (1934), 332. For Godkin's unvarnished opinion of Dana, see Godkin to Norton, Oct. 16, 1869, *Ogden*, I, 305. Cf. *Sun*, April 17, 1890.
111. "What to do With the Unemployed," *Nation*, Dec. 28, 1893, pp. 481-482. Social gospellers among the clergy were not exempted from Godkin's strictures. Preachers, declared he, who had set aside the "theological gospel" to preach the "gospel of social endeavor" must bear with economists of the new school some of the blame for having incited the present "prodigious economic tumult" among the masses. "The Economic Man," *North American Review*, CLIII (1891), 502.
112. *Ogden*, II, 185. Cf. "The Main Question," *Nation*, Oct. 14, 1869, p. 308.

## NOTES CHAPTER TWO

1. "Retrospect," *Nation*, July 3, 1890, pp. 4-5.
2. E. L. Godkin, *Some Unforeseen Tendencies of Democracy* (Boston, 1898), *passim*.
3. "Charles Francis Adams (Sr.)," *Nation*, Nov. 25, 1886, p. 430.
4. *Ibid*.
5. *Ibid*.
6. James Ford Rhodes, "Charles Francis Adams," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition (New York, 1910), I, 175.
7. Bishop, *Anecdotes*, p. 106.
8. "Personalities," *Nation*, Dec. 29, 1892, p. 488.
9. "The Proper Work of the City Club," *ibid.*, April 21, 1892, p. 296.
10. Insofar as that was possible, Godkin added as a qualification. To attempt to abolish discontent, said he in 1891, "is as hopeless a task as to abolish poverty." "The Economic Man," *North American Review*, CLIII (1891), p. 499.
11. "The American Diplomatic Service," *Nation*, Feb. 27, 1868, p. 166.
12. *Ibid*.
13. *Saturday Review* (London), Aug. 22, 1868, pp. 248-249.
14. "The Chinese Treaty," *Nation*, Sept. 10, 1868, p. 205.
15. See Godkin to Norton, Aug. 15, 1891, *Ogden*, I, 291.
16. See vol. I of the *Nation*, especially Oct. 26, 1865, p. 527; and Nov. 30, 1865, p. 674. For an assertion by Godkin that "the question of domestic service is fast becoming a question of civilization itself," see "The Coming of the Barbarian," *ibid.*, July 15, 1869, p. 45.
17. See, for example, Harold W. Stoke, "Edwin Lawrence Godkin, Defender of Democracy," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXX (1931), 339. Barbara D. Cochran reaches the somewhat startling conclusion that Godkin, besides being a champion of democracy, was "popular." (Cochran, "The Evolution of Journalism," in George F. Mott, ed., *Survey of Journalism*



[New York, 1937], p. 23.) O. G. Villard is somewhat contradictory. (*Some Newspapers and Newspapermen*, pp. 297-300; *Fighting Years*, p. 119) Mary V. MacLachlin repeats the popular error in "Edwin Lawrence Godkin: Utilitarian Editor." Ph. D. thesis in University of Minnesota Library (Minneapolis, 1948), p. 367.

18. *Ogden*, I, 109.

19. *Ibid.*, II, 213; "The Victorian Jubilee," *Nation*, June 23, 1887, pp. 526-527; "The Hereditary Principle," *ibid.*, Nov. 28, 1889, pp. 424-425.

20. See, for example, *ibid.*, "Fame and Notoriety," Oct. 17, 1889, p. 306; "Congress and the Constitution," March 21, 1895, p. 214; "The Moral Aspect of the French Exposition," *ibid.*, Nov. 28, 1889, p. 426. On universal suffrage see *ibid.*, III, 331, 421, 430-431, 462, 498; V, 286.

21. See *Ogden*, II, 31; *Nation*, May 13, 1869, p. 369; Edmund Burke, *Orations and Essays* (New York, 1900), introduction by Edwin L. Godkin.

22. Villard, *Some Newspapers and Newspapermen*, pp. 293-296; Steffens, *Autobiography*, pp. 172, 179, 180; Bishop, *Anecdotes*, pp. 87, 97-98; Nevins, *The Evening Post*, pp. 527-528. Bryce (*Studies*, p. 36) is in error on this.

23. *Ogden*, II, 63.

24. Godkin to his wife, June 4, 1889, *Ogden*, II, 143.

25. For an astute analysis of nineteenth-century bourgeois democracy in action, see Carl Becker, *Modern Democracy* (New Haven, 1941).

26. *Nation*, July 13, 1876, p. 20.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

28. See "State and National Politics," *ibid.*, Oct. 15, 1891, p. 288; *ibid.*, June 12, 1866, p. 745; *ibid.*, Aug. 30, 1866, p. 173.

29. *Ibid.*, June 14, 1877, p. 346.

30. See *ibid.*, "The Government of Our Great Cities," Oct. 18, 1866, p. 312; "What Are We Going To Do About It," April 13, 1871, pp. 252-253; "Tweed," Oct. 18, 1877, p. 237; "The Moral of Tweed's Career," April 18, 1878, p. 257; "The Future of Tammany," Nov. 15, 1894, p. 356; "The Problems of Municipal Government," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (Philadelphia, 1894), IV, 857-882. Cf. *Nation*, Dec. 19, 1872, p. 400.

31. Cited in Becker, *Modern Democracy*, p. 31.

32. *Ogden*, II, 51.

33. Bryce, *Studies*, p. 381.

34. Kirkland, *Business in the Gilded Age*, p. 39.

35. *Ogden*, II, 72-73.

36. "The Diplomatic and Consular Service Bill," *Nation*, Dec. 17, 1868, p. 498.

37. "American Ministers Abroad," *ibid.*, Feb. 14, 1867, p. 132.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*, Cf. "What to do with Hawaii," *Nation*, Jan. 18, 1894, p. 42.

41. "The American Diplomatic Service," p. 165.

42. *Ibid.*
43. "The Wages in the Public Service," *Nation*, July 8, 1869, pp. 26-27. But usually the editor blamed official corruption on the tariff.
44. "American Ministers Abroad," *ibid.*, p. 133.
45. For *Nation* ridicule of Congressional attempts in 1893 to reform the American diplomatic establishment along lines similar to those proposed by Godkin, see *ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1893, p. 241.
46. "Official Salaries," *ibid.*, June 25, 1868, p. 509.
47. *Ibid.* This, likewise, was Lord Bryce's conclusion. Professor Kirkland, surprisingly, sees Godkin as one who was lavish in his praise of the rural type — "a Thomas Jefferson translated to the second half of the nineteenth century." (Kirkland, *Business in the Gilded Age*, p. 24.)
48. "The Great Dress Question," *Nation*, April 2, 1868, pp. 267-268.
49. "The Week," *ibid.*, March 26, 1868, p. 242.
50. See Chapter IV herein.
51. "The Great Dress Question," p. 266.
52. *Ibid.*
53. "Mr. Lowell," *Nation*, May 28, 1885, p. 436. For purposes of comparison with what follows, the reader may wish to consult Beckles Willson, *America's Ambassadors to England* (New York, 1929). Mention should also be made of the *Moran Diary*, Library of Congress, which is a mine of information on American ministers to England in this period. The comments of Benjamin Moran, first secretary of the legation at London, on Reverdy Johnson, Motley, and General Schenk are especially revealing.
54. "The English Mission," *Nation*, Nov. 15, 1888, p. 389.
55. See p. 39 herein.
56. "Mr. Reverdy Johnson's Apology for Mr. Schenck," *Nation*, Jan. 6, 1876, p. 5; "The Alabama Convention," *ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1869, p. 65.
57. Godkin to Norton, date not specified, *Ogden*, I, 304. Cf. *Nation*, April 15, 1869, p. 286; July 21, 1870, p. 35.
58. See pp. 113-117 herein.
59. "Mr. Reverdy Johnson's Apology for Mr. Schenck," p. 5; Godkin to Hewitt (1877), as quoted in Allan Nevins, *Abram S. Hewitt* (New York, 1935), p. 303.
60. "Mr. Lowell," p. 436.
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. As quoted in *Ogden*, I, 290-291.
64. Watterson to Bayard, July 16, 1886, as quoted in Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, pp. 352-353, n.
65. "The English Mission," p. 389.
66. *Ibid.*
67. See especially "The Manners of Americans in Europe," *Nation*, Feb. 1, 1883, pp. 97-98; "American Ministers Abroad," p. 133.

68. "American Ministers Abroad," p. 133.
69. *Ibid.*
70. "Concerning Going to Europe," *Nation*, April 26, 1894, pp. 307-308.
71. "The Consular Reform," *ibid.*, Sept. 26, 1895, p. 218.
72. Godkin to Smith, date not specified (1899), *Ogden*, II, 219.
73. "The Diplomatic and Consular Service Bill," pp. 498-499.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 499.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 498.
76. *Ibid.*, pp. 498-499.
77. Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People* (New York, 1946), p. 426.
78. *Nation*, Jan. 22, 1880, p. 51.
79. "Our Diplomatsists," *ibid.*, March 28, 1878, p. 209.
80. *Ibid.*
81. "Mr. Lowell," p. 436. See also *ibid.*, "The Moral of Elkins," Dec. 31, 1891, p. 502; "Ambassadors," April 6, 1893, pp. 246-247; "The Van Alen Case," Oct. 5, 1893, pp. 240-241; "Good Work for 'Good Americans,'" April 5, 1894, pp. 247-248.
82. "Mr. Lowell," p. 436.
83. "Our Diplomatsists," p. 209.
84. "The American Diplomatic Service," pp. 165-166.
85. "The Reasons Why Mr. Lowell Should Be Recalled," *Nation*, June 1, 1882, p. 458.
86. "The American Diplomatic Service," p. 165.
87. "Our Diplomatsists," p. 209. George P. Marsh (1801-1882) was a well-known philologist and frequent contributor to the *Nation*. In 1861 he became first United States minister to the kingdom of Italy, which post he held until his death. Bayard Taylor (1825-1878) was prominent in eastern literary circles. He had also written for the *Nation*. He died shortly after taking up his duties as United States minister to Germany, a few months after this was written. Both Marsh and Lowell corresponded frequently with Godkin. For sketches of the four men, see *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1932).
88. "Our Diplomatsists," p. 210.
89. "American Ministers Abroad," p. 134. But for evidence that Godkin considered talent and manners of somewhat more importance than money, see Godkin, *Nation*, "The Leader of Society," Oct. 2, 1890, pp. 263-264; "The Exclusives," Feb. 18, 1892, pp. 126-127.
90. On this controversial subject as it concerned Godkin, compare Chilton R. Bush, *Editorial Thinking and Writing* (New York, 1932), p. 85, with Villard, *Some Newspapers and Newspapermen*, p. 300. Cf. Godkin, "Mob Violence," *Nation*, Oct. 29, 1896, p. 322.
91. For an implied endorsement by Godkin of "Robber Baron" methods, see "Mr. Carlisle's Easy Lesson," *ibid.*, May 28, 1891, p. 434.

92. Godkin, "Notoriety," *ibid.*, July 20, 1871, p. 39. Cf. *ibid.*, April 21, 1892, p. 295. For comments on Jay Gould, Cyrus Field and Russell Sage, see Godkin, "Cleveland's Independence," *ibid.*, Oct. 2, 1884, p. 281.

93. "The Diplomatic and Consular Service Bill," p. 458.

### NOTES CHAPTER THREE

1. Dexter Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1826-1867* (Baltimore, 1933), p. 435.

2. Seward to Bigelow, May 21, 1864, as quoted in Frederic Bancroft, *Life of William H. Seward* (New York, 1900), II, 430.

3. Seward to Motley, Oct. 9, 1863, U. S. Documents, *Foreign Relations* (Washington, 1863), II, 936. Cf. Gustav Koerner, *Nation*, Jan. 30, 1896, p. 96. Koerner, who was in 1863 the American minister at Madrid, drew a similar reprimand for unofficially stating to the Spanish foreign minister his opinion that the Monroe Doctrine was applicable in Mexico.

4. Frank L. Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy* (Chicago, 1931), p. 547.

5. See Perkins, *op. cit.*, p. 471.

6. Thomas W. Balch, *The Geneva Arbitration* (Philadelphia, 1900), p. 42.

7. See *Correspondencia de la Legación Mexicana en Washington durante la Intervención Extranjera* (Mexico, 1870-1892), V, 466, 477, 504.

8. "The Week" was a regular *Nation* feature consisting of from one to two pages of short leader paragraphs written by the staff and editorializing on the week's events. Like nearly everything which appeared in the *Nation*, contributions to it were unsigned. But Garrison wrote only occasional paragraphs, and Dennett, the only major contributor besides Godkin, was away a part of this time. The editor was clearly at his best in "The Week." However, in the interest of accuracy, the writer has felt compelled to deny him authorship of any but those writings for which a record has been preserved. At the same time it should be kept in mind that he was personally accountable for all viewpoints expressed in the *Nation*. On this point see Godkin to Norton, Dec. 3, 1874, *Ogden*, I, 308.

9. See Godkin to Norton, Jan. 15, 1866, *Ogden*, I, 243-244.

10. The British government once contemplated such an intervention. See Spencer Walpole, *The Life of Lord John Russell* (London, 1889), II, 344-352.

11. Rumors of this sort had been current since 1863. Although the Confederate government would have rebuffed such a proposal, it did seek recognition in exchange for support of the French in Mexico. See J. G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York, 1937), Chapter XIII, especially pp. 240, 242, 243, 244.

12. *Nation*, July 6, 1865, p. 9.

13. *Ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1866, p. 199. Jecker, whom the self-seeking brother-in-law of Napoleon had gotten naturalized as a French citizen, was the principal holder of a fifteen-million-peso bond issue that he had supposedly marketed for the short-lived Miramon regime in 1859. Although the transaction wore the appearance of a gigantic swindle (the Mexican government got only one twentieth of the face value of the bonds), Jecker demanded and ultimately

got from the Mexican government more than three times what he had paid for the bonds. See *Les Papiers Secrets du Second Empire* (Brussels, 1870), p. 34; G. Niox, *Expédition du Mexique* (Paris, 1874), p. 119; Mexico: Ministerio de Hacienda y Crédito Público, *Memoria* (Mexico, 1870), pp. 489-537. Hereafter cited as *Memoria de Hacienda y Crédito Público, 1870*.

14. *Nation*, July 6, 1865, p. 9. For a representative attack on Napoleon, see *ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1865, p. 489.

15. *Ibid.*, July 18, 1865, p. 36. Cf. *ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1866, p. 34. Grandiose schemes, most of which never materialized, were projected for incorporating Confederate units into Maximilian's army and for establishing Southern colonies in Mexico. (Foreign Relations [1865], III, 495-535.) According to Professor Rippy, three or four thousand Confederate soldiers, including about a half dozen generals, went to Mexico. (J. F. Rippy, *The United States and Mexico* [New York, 1926], pp. 245-251.) By November, 1870, according to the United States minister to Mexico, there was not "a single notability remaining out of the many Confederate refugees." *Foreign Relations* (1870), p. 295.

16. *Nation*, Aug. 3, 1865, p. 132. *Ibid.*, Aug. 10, 1865, p. 163.

17. See *Correspondencia de la Legación Mexicana*, V, 77, 223, 265, 281, 286.

18. Perkins, *Monroe Doctrine*, pp. 470-475.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 469-473, 498.

20. Philip H. Sheridan, *Personal Memoirs* (New York, 1888), II, 224-225.

21. *Nation*, Nov. 30, 1865, p. 678.

22. *Memoria de Hacienda y Crédito Público, 1870*, pp. 269-270.

23. Peck, *Twenty Years of the Republic*, p. 443.

24. *Nation*, Nov. 2, 1865, p. 546.

25. Rippy, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

26. *Memoria de Hacienda y Crédito Público, 1870*, p. 657.

27. *Nation*, Nov. 30, 1865, p. 678.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1866, p. 33.

30. *Ibid.*

31. See *ibid.*, Aug. 17, 1865, p. 195; Jan. 11, 1866, p. 34.

32. *Ibid.*, July 26, 1866, p. 69.

33. *Foreign Relations* (1865), III, 412-415. Instructions of Sept. 6, 1865.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 421-422. Instructions of Nov. 6, 1865.

35. Perkins, *Monroe Doctrine*, p. 500.

36. James D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897* (New York, 1911), V, 3566-3568. NOTE: The pagination in this edition differs considerably from that of the earlier, standard (Washington, 1896-1899) edition.

37. *Foreign Relations* (1865), III, 429. Instructions of Dec. 16, 1865.

38. *Nation*, Nov. 23, 1865, p. 642. Seward's action nevertheless seems to have had a somewhat sobering effect on the French monarch. In a conversation with Bigelow the following month (December, 1865), Napoleon



appeared apprehensive over the Logan and Schofield appointments and commented to the minister that he expected all of the French troops to be out of Mexico by the following autumn. One month later, Druyn de l'Huys, the French foreign minister, gave Bigelow to understand that France was ready to withdraw whenever it had assurances that the United States would not interfere to overthrow Maximilian. John Bigelow, *Retrospections of an Active Life* (New York, 1909-1913), III, 298-301, 311, 323-325.

39. *Nation*, Sept. 7, 1865, p. 303; Nov. 30, 1865, p. 678. Cf. *ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1866, p. 198.

40. *Ibid.*, March 1, 1866, p. 265.

41. *Diary of Gideon Welles* (Boston, 1911), II, 333. Entry of July 14, 1865. Cf. Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Rise of American Naval Power* (Princeton, 1939), pp. 165-166, 171-172.

42. *Times* (London), July 17, 1866; G. V. Fox, *Narrative of the Mission to Russia, in 1866, of the Hon. Gustavus Vasa Fox* (New York, 1873), pp. 39, 40, 43.

43. "The Week," *Nation*, March 22, 1866, p. 353.

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Congressional Globe*, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 3138. For the debate which followed, see *ibid.*, pp. 3155-3161. The speeches all reflected the extraordinary interest in the Monroe Doctrine.

46. *Nation*, June 21, 1866, p. 785.

47. *Ibid.*

48. Santa Anna's greed for power and his capacity for intrigue were undimmed in 1866, even though he was then approaching seventy and had spent the greater part of nineteen years in exile. He had eagerly offered his services to Maximilian in 1863 and returned to Mexico in the following year only to be ordered away after his old enemy, Juan Almonte, gained the Emperor's favor. The old intriguer returned to exile on the island of St. Thomas, vowing a "war to the death against the invaders." W. H. Callcott, *Santa Anna* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1936), pp. 329-335. Cf. Bigelow, *Recollections*, III, 305, 335.

49. Callcott, *Santa Anna*, pp. 339-343. On the interview between Seward and Santa Anna, see *Correspondencia de la Legación Mexicana*, VII, 5; Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, *Mi Historia Militar Y Política, 1810-1874* (Mexico, 1905) (unedited memoirs); and García and Pereyra, eds., *Correspondencia secreta de los principales intervencionista mexicanos, 1860-1862* (Mexico, 1905-1907), III, 127-130. On Santa Anna's visit to the United States see, in addition to Callcott, *op. cit.*, J. M. Callahan, *American Policy in Mexican Relations* (New York, 1932), pp. 322-330.

50. "Topics of the Day," *Nation*, May 21, 1866, p. 641. Godkin defined "the American people" as the "property-owners, taxpayers, and people of considerable intelligence and business experience." (Grimes, *The Political Liberalism of the New York Nation*, p. 11.) But even in its limited application, his statement exaggerated American knowledge of Mexican politics. Santa Anna and Juan Almonte were mortal enemies.

51. "The Week," *Nation*, Nov. 15, 1866, p. 381.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*, Nov. 29, 1866, p. 432.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. Rippy, *United States and Mexico*, p. 277.
57. For representative signs of the growing popularity of the Liberal cause in the United States as well as of the organizational talents of Sr. Romero, see the following pamphlets: *The Situation of Mexico: speech delivered by Senor Romero . . . at a dinner in the city of New York, on the 16th of December, 1863* (New York, 1864); *Dinner to Senor Matias Romero . . . on the 29th of March, 1864* (New York, 1864); *Proceedings of a Meeting of citizens of New York, to express sympathy and respect for the Mexican exiles. Held at Cooper Institute, July 17, 1865* (New York, 1865).
58. "Topics of the Day," *Nation*, June 18, 1866, p. 769. For the proposal itself see *Congressional Globe*, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., June 16, 1866. For official reaction to it, see *Foreign Relations* (1866), III, 576-578.
59. *Nation*, Aug. 2, 1866, p. 81.
60. See p. 65 herein.
61. Seward to Campbell, Oct. 25, 1866, in Seward, *Works*, V, 470-474. Cf. Seward to Bigelow, Nov. 23, 1866, *Foreign Relations* (1866), I, 366-367.
62. *Ibid.* For earlier protests see *ibid.*, pp. 358, 359.
63. Perkins, *Monroe Doctrine*, pp. 535-536. The documents are in Bigelow, *Retrospections*, III, 612-618. Professor Perkins describes Seward's dispatch as "hardly more than a bald piece of domestic politics in the guise of a diplomatic note." For the reaction of Bigelow to it, see Bigelow, *op. cit.*, III, 611.
64. "The Week," *Nation*, Nov. 29, 1866, p. 422.
65. *Ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1866, p. 343.
66. *Ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1866, p. 381. Campbell was the plenipotentiary. Sherman, it appears, accompanied him chiefly to add impressiveness to the formal recognition of Juarez. Callahan, *American Policy in Mexican Relations*, p. 328.
67. *Nation*, Nov. 29, 1866, p. 422.
68. *Ibid.*, Nov. 29, 1866, p. 431.
69. See Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, V, 3653-3654.
70. "The Week," *Nation*, Dec. 6, 1866, p. 441.
71. *Ibid.*, Dec. 13, 1866, p. 462.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*, Dec. 27, 1866, p. 509.
74. *Ibid.*
75. Callahan, *American Policy in Mexican Relations*, pp. 328-329.
76. See especially "The Week," *Nation*, Nov. 8, 1866, p. 361.
77. *Ibid.*, May 30, 1867, pp. 426-427.

78. *Ibid.*, June 6, 1867, p. 446. Although himself given to such overstatement, Godkin frequently excoriated the Cable news agent for this habit. As he once aptly noted: "Speech is golden indeed at a guinea a word, address and signature included." *Ibid.*, August 3, 1865, p. 144.

79. *Ibid.*, July 4, 1867, pp. 1-2.

80. See his *Nation* editorials, "The Criminals and the Law," Feb. 11, 1869, pp. 106-107; "The Death Penalty," March 4, 1869, pp. 166-167; "The Guiteau Trial," Feb. 2, 1882, p. 93; "Guiteau and the 'Experts,'" June 29, 1882, p. 536; "The Execution," July 6, 1882, p. 6; "The Supreme Court and the Anarchists," Oct. 27, 1887, pp. 326-327; "The Execution of the Anarchists," Nov. 10, 1887, pp. 366-367. Cf. "The Week," *Nation*, Feb. 7, 1867, p. 103.

81. For the text of Maximilian's decree, see *Foreign Relations* (1865), III, 458. On the executions which followed, see *ibid.*, pp. 460-472.

82. "The Week," *Nation*, July 11, 1867, p. 21. The *Nation* greatly exaggerated what was said. See *Congressional Globe*, 40th Cong., 1st Sess., (1867), pp. 508-509, 602-605, 701. Remarks of Senators Chandler, Nye, Fowler, Wilson and Howard.

83. "The Mexican Moral," *Nation*, July 18, 1867, pp. 51-52.

84. On July 26, 1866, (p. 69) the *Nation* noted a pro-Liberal bias in a *North American Review* article on the Mexican situation. See *North American Review*, "The Mexican Question," CIII (July, 1866), 106-142.

85. *Nation*, Nov. 29, 1866, p. 431; "The Mexican Moral," p. 52.

86. *Nation*, May 30, 1867, p. 426; *ibid.*, July 4, 1867, p. 1.

87. "The Mexican Moral," p. 52.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

89. *Ibid.* Godkin, by way of illustration, pointed out that Juarez, in his negotiations with the French, had had to admit "that the great difficulty of his position was that the provinces refused obedience to the orders issued from the capital, and that he was consequently unable to collect the revenue. . . ." All of which, the editor effectively noted, "is very like a paralytic assuring his friends that he would be in the enjoyment of perfect health if he only had the use of his limbs."

90. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

91. *Ibid.* For the debates and resolutions in Congress, see *Congressional Globe*, 40th Cong., 1st Sess. (1867), pp. 504, 508-509, 511, 598, 701, 702, Cf. "The Week," *Nation*, July 11, 1867, p. 21.

92. "The Mexican Moral," p. 52.

93. *Nation*, July 25, 1867, p. 63.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

95. *Ibid.*

96. *Ibid.*

97. *Nation*, Oct. 24, 1867, p. 327; Dec. 27, 1877, p. 391.

## NOTES CHAPTER FOUR

1. There is no adequate monograph on the *Alabama* controversy. Various aspects of it are considered in E. D. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War* (2 vols., New York, 1925), *passim*; H. W. Temple, "William H. Seward," in S. F. Bemis, ed., *The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy* (New York, 1928), VII, 3-115; J. V. Fuller, "Hamilton Fish," in *ibid.*, VII, 125-214; C. F. Adams, Jr., "The Treaty of Washington," in *Lee at Appomattox and Other Papers* (Boston, 1902), pp. 31-255; J. F. Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850* (New York, 1893-1922), VI, 335-377; E. P. Oberholtzer, *A History of the United States Since the Civil War*, II, 391-474; and Allan Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, pp. 142-566 and *passim*. The last two named are the most satisfactory treatments of the controversy after 1868.

2. Adams to Russell, May 20, 1865, *Correspondence Concerning Claims against Great Britain* (Washington, 1871), I, 292, 316. Cf. *Nation*, April 29, 1869, p. 330.

3. *Saturday Review* (London), Jan. 18, 1868, p. 65.

4. See Great Britain: Sessional Papers, *Correspondence Respecting British and American Claims Arising Out of the Late Civil War* (London, 1867), XXIV, 165, *et. seq.*

5. U. S. Docs., *Foreign Relations* (1868), I, 25.

6. H. W. Torrey, "Those Belligerent Rights," *Nation*, July 20, 1865, p. 69. "The Week," *ibid.*, Aug. 3, 1865, p. 132. For additional discussion by Godkin and his associates of the belligerent rights question, see *Nation*, I, 419, 548, 609; II, 258, 577, 673; III, 382-383, 403, 423; IV, 113, 162.

7. "The *Alabama* Controversy," *ibid.*, Feb. 13, 1868, p. 127.

8. *Saturday Review*, Jan. 18, 1868, p. 65.

9. An abortive treaty entered into with Lord Stanley which President Johnson refused to accept. After that Seward led the American minister step by step through the negotiations.

10. For ridicule by a Liberal British journal of Johnson's activities, see *Spectator* (London), Feb. 20, 1869, p. 207; Feb. 27, 1869, p. 237.

11. "The 'Alabama' Convention," *Nation*, Jan. 28, 1869, p. 65.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

13. *Spectator*, Feb. 27, 1869, p. 250.

14. "The 'Sentiment' of the 'Alabama' Case," *Nation*, March 18, 1869, p. 205.

15. *Ibid.* For representative descriptions of the Union Army, see the *Times* (London), Aug. 4, 1864, letters from a Southern correspondent; *Punch* (London), Nov. 8, 1862, p. 194. Cf. Adams, "The Treaty of Washington," pp. 62-66, 75-77; Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*, pp. 198-223.

16. "The 'Sentiment' of the 'Alabama' Case," p. 205.

17. *Ibid.*

18. "Cant: A Monologue in the Vapours," *Blackwood's Magazine*, CVI (1869), 196; "The Session," *North American Review*, CVIII (1869), 637-639. For the divided opinions of other journals, see *Harper's* XXXIV (1869), 152; *Spectator* (London), May 15, 1869, p. 584.

19. "The Difficulties of Arbitration," *Nation*, Feb. 8, 1872, p. 84.

20. "The Latest Phase of the Controversy with England," *ibid.*, April 29, 1869, p. 331. Professor Nevins is in error when he attributes authorship of an earlier editorial to Godkin. (Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, p. 149.)

21. "The Session," *loc. cit.*, pp. 637-639.

22. "What is the Use of International Law?" *Nation*, May 13, 1869, p. 368.

23. See "The Meetings at the Hague," *ibid.*, Oct. 14, 1875, p. 241.

24. For the pained reaction of one normally friendly English journal, see the *Spectator*, May 1, 1869, p. 528; May 8, 1869, p. 556; and May 15, 1869, p. 584.

25. "Mr. Sumner's Speech in England," *Nation*, May 27, 1869, p. 408.

26. Cited in Moorfield Story, *Charles Sumner* (New York, 1900), p. 368.

27. "Mr. Sumner's Speech in England," p. 408. Five days later William James wrote his brother Henry expressing the same sentiments and singling out the *Nation* for praise. William James to Henry James, Jr., June 1, 1869. *James Papers*, Harvard.

28. "The 'Alabama' Case Again," *Nation*, Dec. 30, 1869, pp. 580-581.

29. Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, p. 301.

30. *Times* (London), Dec. 31, 1869; *Spectator*, Jan. 1, 1870, p. 5.

31. "A Neutral Opinion on the 'Alabama' Case," *Nation*, Oct. 6, 1870, p. 218; J. K. Bluntschli, "Opinion impartial sur la Question de l'*Alabama* et sur la Manière de la Résoudre," *La Revue de Droit International et de Legislation Comparée* (Brussels, 1870), pp. 452-485.

32. "The 'Alabama' Case and the Canadians," *Nation*, Nov. 10, 1870, p. 308.

33. Entry in *Fish Diary*, Nov. 20, 1870, cited in Nevins, *op. cit.*, pp. 433-434.

34. "A Neutral Opinion on the 'Alabama' Case," p. 219.

35. "The 'Alabama' Case and the Canadians," p. 308.

36. Entry in *Fish Diary*, cited in Nevins, *op. cit.*, p. 427.

37. See J. C. Bancroft Davis, *Mr. Fish and the Alabama Claims* (New York, 1893), pp. 35-36. For the correspondence between Fish and British minister Sir Edward Thornton, see *Correspondence Concerning Claims Against Great Britain*, VI, 15-18.

38. J. H. Haswell, comp., *Treaties and Conventions concluded between the United States of America and Other Powers since July 4th, 1776* (Washington, 1889), p. 479.

39. *Foreign Relations* (1872), Geneva Arbitration, I, *The Case of the United States to be laid before the Tribunal of Arbitration to be convened at Geneva* . . . . .

40. "The Difficulties of Arbitration," *Nation*, Feb. 8, 1872, p. 84.

41. See Caleb Cushing, *The Treaty of Washington* (New York, 1873), pp. 42, 43.



42. Entry in *Fish Diary*, cited in Nevins, *op. cit.*, p. 513; F. W. Hackett, *Reminiscences of the Geneva Tribunal* (New York, 1911), p. 105.

43. "The Difficulties of Arbitration," p. 84.

44. See J. B. Moore, *History and Digest of the International Arbitrations to which the United States Has Been a Party* (Washington, 1898), I, 541-544, 629-637; Andrew Lang, *Life, Letters and Diaries of Sir Stafford Northcote, First Earl of Iddesleigh* (London, 1890), II, 5-13, *passim*.

45. "How the Treaty Has Broken Down," *Nation*, Feb 15, 1872, p. 100.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 101

47. "Something More About Our 'Case,'" *Nation*, March 21, 1872, p. 181.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

49. "The 'Treaty Muddle,'" *Nation*, May 16, 1872, p. 317.

50. Letter, Gladstone to Granville, Jan. 14, 1872, cited in Nevins, *op. cit.*, p. 526.

51. Rhodes, *History of the United States*, VI, 335-377. Oberholtzer, for a reason unexplained, ignores the Godkin version.

52. "I suppose we must take Americans as we find them," Davis reported to Fish resignedly, "and not quarrel with those who love the taste of an English Lord's backsides." *Fish Correspondence*, cited in Nevins, *op. cit.*, p. 555.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 554-557.

54. See *New York Herald*, May 13 and 14, 1872.

55. "The 'Treaty Muddle,'" p. 317.

56. *Atlantic Monthly*, XXIX (1872), 770-771.

57. Letter, Davis to Hackett, July 10, 1902, cited in Hackett, *Reminiscences of the Geneva Tribunal*, p. 193. Hackett was private secretary to Davis at Geneva.

58. Hackett, *op. cit.*, p. 401.

59. "The Verdict at Geneva," *Nation*, Sept. 19, 1872, p. 180.

60. "The 'Treaty Muddle,'" p. 318.

61. "The Verdict at Geneva," p. 180.

62. *Ibid.*

63. "Sir Alexander Cockburn's 'Dissent,'" *Nation*, Oct. 17, 1872, pp. 245-246.

64. "The 'Alabama' Case Again," p. 580.

65. On the complex problem of legal evidence, see Earl Russell to Lord Lyons, March 27, 1863, in *Official Correspondence Respecting British and American Claims Arising out of the Late Civil War*, p. 67.

66. See Ferdinand Grimm, *Northwest Water Boundary; Report of the Experts Summoned by the German Emperor*. Ed. and trans. by David Hunter Miller (Seattle, 1942).

67. "The Pros and Cons of the Fisheries Award," p. 178.

68. *Ibid.*

69. Entries in *Fish Diary*, February, 1877, cited in Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, p. 870.
70. See Edward Stanwood, *James G. Blaine* (New York, 1905), pp. 201-202; James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years in Congress* (Norwich, Conn., 1884-1886), II, 620.
71. See letter, Richardson to Hackett, June 22, 1882, cited in F. W. Hackett, *The Geneva Award Acts* (Boston, 1882), p. 175.
72. See Act of Congress, March 3, 1873, *U. S. Statutes at Large*, XVII, 601.
73. S. F. Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York, 1950), p. 412n.
74. See *American Law Review*, January, 1873. Cf. letter to the *Nation*, Jan. 16, 1873, p. 30.
75. "The Distribution of the *Alabama* Damages," *ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1873, p. 37.
76. *Ibid.*
77. See *U. S. Statutes at Large*, XIX, 1. The life of the Court was prolonged by the supplementary Acts of Dec. 24, 1875, March 6, 1876, and July 22, 1876.
78. See Hackett, *The Geneva Award Acts*, pp. 60-62.
79. *Punch*, April 29, 1876, p. 165.
80. "The Geneva Bill," *Nation*, July 27, 1876, p. 54.
81. See "The Government and the *Alabama* Damages," *ibid.*, Jan. 30, 1873, p. 70, *et seq.*
82. *Nation*, July 27, 1876, p. 57.
83. "The Pros and Cons of the Fisheries Award," *ibid.*, March 14, 1878, p. 178.
84. "The Week," *Nation*, Feb. 12, 1880, p. 106. Cf. *ibid.*, April 1, 1880, p. 243; April 22, 1880, p. 298; April 29, 1880, pp. 317-318. See also *New York Herald*, April 17, 1880, and May 24, 1882; and debate between Senators Blaine and Thurmond, *Congressional Record*, March 29, 1880, pp. 1925-1928.
85. "The Week," *Nation*, Dec. 22, 1881, p. 483.
86. Acts of June 5, 1882 (*U. S. Statutes*, XXII, 98) and June 2, 1886 (*U. S. Statutes*, XXIV, 77).
87. In view of the curiously inaccurate assertion by writer Marquis James (*Biography of a Business* [New York, 1842], p. 179) that half of the *Alabama* award is still in the United States Treasury, being wrongfully withheld from the insurance companies, it is perhaps pertinent to quote from the following letter from the Deputy Treasurer of the United States. The letter reads in part: "The total amount of the award of \$15,500,000 paid by Great Britain, with accretions of \$2,939,804.96, arising from interest earned by investment if the original sum in United States bonds on its receipt into the Treasury September 9, 1873, to March 31, 1877, amounted to the total sum of \$18,439,804.96 when the bonds were cancelled. This amount has been paid out of the Treasury to claimants, with the exception of the sum of \$9,892.99, which was held in trust for several hundred allottees who had not applied for the prorata shares due them, the balance due in over 750 of the cases being less than \$25.00.

"Under provisions of the Permanent Appropriation Repeal Act approved June 26, 1934, the above mentioned amount of \$9,892.99 was carried to the Surplus Fund of the Treasury on June 30, 1938." (E. Doolan to the writer, Dec. 7, 1953)

## NOTES CHAPTER FIVE

1. *Nation*, 1865, July 13, p. 34; July 20, p. 79; July 27, p. 100; Aug. 3, pp. 143-144; Aug. 10, p. 177; Aug. 17, p. 193; Aug. 24, p. 225; Aug. 31, p. 271; Sept. 14, pp. 323-324; Sept. 21, p. 356. *Ibid.*, Aug. 2, 1866, p. 81. On the projected Russo-American and West Indian cables, see *ibid.*, March 1, 1866, p. 257; Jan. 31, 1867, p. 83.

2. *Ibid.*, Aug. 3, 1865, p. 144; Sept. 27, 1866, p. 243. *Ibid.*, May 16, 1867, pp. 395-396; May 30, 1867, p. 426; July 4, 1867, p. 3; July 11, 1867, pp. 22-23; Aug. 15, 1867, p. 123; Jan. 30, 1868, p. 83.

3. Quoted in Wingate, *Views and Interviews on Journalism*, p. 211.

4. *Nation*, Nov. 29, 1866, p. 432.

5. See p. 70 herein.

6. See T. A. Bailey, "Why the United States Purchased Alaska," *Pacific Historical Review*, III, (1934), 49.

7. *Nation* (1867), April 4, p. 266; April 11, p. 286; April 18, p. 305; Nov. 21, p. 406 and Dec. 19, p. 493; *ibid.*, (1868), Jan. 2, pp. 4-5; Feb. 13, p. 122 and May 21, p. 403.

8. *Ibid.*, Dec. 10, 1874, p. 374.

9. See pp. 68-70 herein.

10. *Nation*, July 11, 1867, p. 21.

11. *Ibid.*, July 25, 1867, p. 63. Cf. Godkin to Norton, Jan. 18, 1865, *Ogden*, II, 33. For comment on subsequent Mexican annexationist proposals, see *Nation*, Dec. 27, 1877, pp. 391-392.

12. Cobden had predicted the union before his death. See J. M. Callahan, *American Policy in Canadian Relations, 1849-1874* (New Haven, 1939), pp. 12, 193.

13. "The Annexation Fever," *Nation*, April 15, 1869, pp. 289-290.

14. *Montreal Gazette*, June 14, 1870, cited in Shippee, *op. cit.*, p. 211. Cf. *Blackwood's Magazine*, CVI (1869), 196; *North American Review*, CVIII (1869), 637-639.

15. "The Annexation Fever," p. 289.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 290.

17. *Ibid.*; "The 'Alabama' Case and the Canadians," *Nation*, Nov. 10, 1870, p. 308.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*, p. 309. For a refutation of Godkin's statement that sentiment for union with the United States was "growing" in Canada in 1870, see C. P. Stacey, "Fenianism and the Rise of National Feeling in Canada at the time of Confederation," *Canadian Historical Review*, XII (1931), 256-261.

20. See *Nation*, Oct. 4, 1866, pp. 270-271; *ibid.*, June 2, 1870, p. 347; *Foreign Relations* (1865), II, 96-97; Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, V, 3595, 3640, 3655, 3718; *Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 493, 3085, 4048, 4193, 4274; *House Report* No. 100, 39 Cong., 1 sess. For useful secondary accounts of American Fenian activity written from the British and Canadian point of view, see Stacey, *loc. cit.*, pp. 238-261, and Shippee, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-239.

21. For the proclamation which followed, see Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, V, 3631.

22. "The Fenian Sop," *Nation*, Oct. 4, 1866, p. 271; *Foreign Relations* (1866), I, 139, 245.

23. "The Latest Phase of Fenianism," *Nation*, Jan. 2, 1868, p. 5.

24. "The Fenian Sop," p. 271.

25. "Eighteen Hundred and Sixty-Six," *Nation*, Dec. 27, 1866, p. 519. "Ireland as a nation," Godkin predicted, "is as dead as Naples or Hanover. Six millions of people — bitterly divided too — have now no separate place in the world, and probably never will again during the existence of our present civilization."

26. "The Latest Phase of Fenianism," p. 6.

27. "The Fenian Sop," p. 271.

28. "The Latest Phase of Fenianism," p. 5.

29. *Ibid.*

30. "The 'Rising' in Ireland," *Nation*, March 14, 1867, p. 213.

31. Van Wyck Brooks, *New England: Indian Summer*, p. 412.

32. So named for the number of Irish-Americans imprisoned for asserted anti-British activities.

33. *Nation* (1867), May 16, pp. 386-387; Dec. 26, p. 518; *ibid.* (1868), Jan. 2, p. 2; Jan. 9, pp. 26-27; Jan. 20, p. 82; Feb. 6, p. 103; April 2, pp. 265-266; April 23, p. 321.

34. See R. L. Morrow, "The Negotiation of the Anglo-American Treaty of 1870," *American Historical Review*, XXXIX (1934), 663-681.

35. "Fenianism as a Swindle," *Nation*, June 2, 1870, p. 347.

36. *Ibid.* These "imposters," Godkin charged, had, over a six or seven year period, successfully bilked their gullible adherents of "perhaps two millions of money." This was the official British point of view, as reflected in the correspondence of British representatives in the United States. See J. E. Wilkins to Bruce, St. Louis, Oct. 5, 1865, and Archibald to Michel, New York, Nov. 27, 1865, cited in Shippee, *op. cit.*, pp. 216, 218.

37. "Fenianism as a Swindle," pp. 347-348.

38. "Protectorates," *Nation*, Jan. 21, 1869, pp. 44-45. On the treaty see Sylvester K. Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii, 1842-1898* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1945), pp. 97-105, and John Patterson, "The United States and Hawaiian Reciprocity, 1867-1870," *Pacific Historical Review*, VII (1938), 14-26.

39. "Protectorates," p. 45. On the interesting question of bribery in connection with the purchase of Alaska, see F. A. Golder, "The Purchase of Alaska," *American Historical Review*, XXV (1920), 419; W. A. Dunning,

"Paying for Alaska," *Political Science Quarterly*, XXVII (1912), 386; R. H. Luthin, "The Sale of Alaska," *Slavonic Review*, XVI (1937), 171.

40. "Protectorates," pp. 44-45.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

43. "Chromo-civilization," *Nation*, Sept. 24, 1874, pp. 201-202.

44. "The Economic Man," *North American Review*, CLIII (1891), 502.

45. "The Annexation Fever," p. 289.

46. "Sympathy," *Nation*, July 28, 1870, p. 52. The United States, Godkin lamented, "went nearly crazy over the Hungarians, and, indeed, over one party of the Hungarians which Hungary has since rejected." (He did not tell his readers that he too had been swept up in the Kossuth craze.) Since then, he continued, "the patriots who Maximilian kept from establishing 'truth and justice, religion and piety' in Mexico have been fêted and caressed." Likewise, the "bands of Greek robbers and politicians" who "got up" the Cretan insurrection received "frantic" acclaim in the United States. Bleeding Cuba, he noted, was the "latest object" of United States sympathy. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

47. "The Latest Phase of Fenianism," p. 6. "Sympathy," p. 52. Cf. *Nation*, Jan. 23, 1868, p. 63.

48. "Sympathy," p. 52.

49. *Nation*, July 21, 1870, p. 36. These were the sentiments of many prominent Americans, including the highly respected German-American liberal Carl Schurz. See J. G. Gazley, *American Opinion of German Unification, 1848-1871* (New York, 1926).

50. "Neutrals and Contraband," *Nation*, Sept. 15, 1870, p. 166.

51. J. F. Rippey, *The Caribbean Danger Zone* (New York, 1940), pp. 117-120.

52. See Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, pp. 260-261, 318.

53. Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, VI, 4053-4055.

54. Fuller, "Hamilton Fish," in Bemis, *American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy*, VII, 162.

55. "The Santo Domingo Row," *Nation*, Dec. 29, 1870, p. 432.

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*

59. See C. C. Tansill, *The United States and Santo Domingo, 1798-1873* (Baltimore, 1938), pp. 366, *et. seq.*; *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXVI (1895), 167-168; *Senate Exec. Doc. No. 34*, 41st Cong., 3 sess., pp. 2-5.

60. "The Santo Domingo Row," p. 432.

61. "The Washington Imbrolio," *Nation*, March 16, 1871, p. 172. Wells, a convert to the free trade doctrines espoused by Godkin and other Cobden admirers in the United States, had come under fire in 1869 for a report he had submitted as special commissioner of revenue in which he advocated lower tariffs. The *Nation*, in defending the New Englander's economic



heresy at the time, complained that there was "something sacred about the theory of protection" that made it, like the institution of slavery, a sacred American cow to be defended by taking "refuge behind the Bible, or the marriage relation." (*Nation*, April 8, 1869, p. 271.) General Cox and E. R. Hoar, whose political purism had alienated the machine politicians surrounding Grant, resigned from the Cabinet under pressure. Both had opposed Grant's Santo Domingo scheme. See Cox, *loc. cit.*, pp. 168-171, and Adams, "The Treaty of Washington" in *Lee at Appomatox and Other Papers*, p. 218. Wells and Cox were frequent contributors to the *Nation*.

62. "The Washington Imbroglio," p. 172.

63. *Ibid.* (Italics are mine.) Allan Nevins employs this specific Godkin interpretation in *Hamilton Fish*, p. 463.

64. "The Santo Domingo Row," p. 432. (Italics are mine.)

65. "The New San Domingo Scheme," *Nation*, Jan. 23, 1873, p. 52.

66. *Ibid.*

67. *Ibid.*

68. Rippey, *Caribbean Danger Zone*, p. 120.

69. See particularly in this connection Tyler Dennett, *Americans in East Asia* (New York, 1922), p. 539.

70. "The American Diplomatic Service," *Nation*, Feb. 27, 1868, p. 166.

71. "The Chinese Treaty," *ibid.*, Sept. 10, 1868, p. 204.

72. "The Coming of the Barbarian," *ibid.*, July 15, 1869, p. 45. On this point see Mary Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York, 1909), p. 21.

73. "The Coming of the Barbarian," p. 44. On the subject of discriminatory legislation toward the Chinese in California, see Lucille Evans, *History of California Labor Legislation* (Berkeley, 1910), pp. 105-125.

74. "The Coming of the Barbarian," p. 45.

75. *Ibid.*

76. *Ibid.*

77. *Ibid.*

78. "The Chinese Invasion," *Nation*, July 14, 1870, p. 20.

79. "The Coming of the Barbarian," p. 45.

80. "The Chinese Invasion," p. 20.

81. "The Government of Our Great Cities," *Nation*, Oct. 18, 1866, p. 312.

82. "The Coming of the Barbarian," p. 45. Godkin listed as major opponents of "electoral reform" (curtailment of the suffrage) the Irish and the proponents of the Negro vote.

83. "The Chinese Invasion," p. 20.

84. Professor Stuart Noblin has investigated this aspect of the activity of Godkin in "George William Curtis and Edwin Lawrence Godkin as Reform Leaders in the United States, 1865-1900," (unpublished master's thesis, Department of History, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1935). Although there is, to be sure, a certain amount of justification for placing Godkin in the company of such political reformers as Moorfield Storey, George William Curtis, and Carl Schurz, he as a rule kept a safe

distance from reformers and reform movements. The one important exception to this rule, aside from his Mugwump activities and his debatable connection with the Free Trade League, was his association with the New York city and state municipal reform movement. In 1876, for example, he sat on a gubernatorial commission which sought with ill success to gain legislative adoption of one of his favorite projects—a plan for the reorganization of municipal government to exclude from participation the property-less non-taxpayer. C. L. Barrows, *William M. Evarts* (Chapel Hill, 1941), pp. 194-196. Cf. "The Government of Our Great Cities," p. 312; "Tweed," Oct. 18, 1877, pp. 237-238; "The Future of Tammany," Nov. 15, 1894, pp. 356-357.

85. "Tertullian at the Amphitheatre," *Nation*, Sept. 22, 1870, pp. 186-188.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

87. *Ibid.*

88. Memorandum, Seward to Evarts, March, 1879, *Hayes MSS*, as quoted in C. C. Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard* (New York, 1940), p. 131.

89. "The *Virginus*. The Reasons for Keeping Cool About It," *Nation*, Nov. 20, 1873, p. 333.

90. The official correspondence is in *Foreign Relations* (1874), pp. 922-1052.

91. For accounts of one of the mass meetings, see *New York Tribune*, Nov. 18, 1873; *Nation*, Nov. 20, 1873, p. 329.

92. *Nation*, Nov. 20, 1873, p. 332.

93. "The *Virginus*. The Reasons for Keeping Cool About It," p. 333.

94. *Ibid.*, pp. 333-334.

95. *Nation*, Nov. 20, 1873, p. 333.

96. *Ibid.*, p. 332.

97. "The *Virginus*. The Reasons for Keeping Cool About It," p. 334.

98. For his views on Anglo-Saxon superiority, see Godkin, *The History of Hungary and the Magyars* (New York, 1853), pp. 368-369; "An English Dream of 'Americanization'," *Nation*, April 5, 1883, p. 290; "The Proper Sieve for Immigrants," *ibid.*, April 16, 1891, p. 312; *Ogden*, I, 125, 186, 282, 295; Bryce, *Studies*, p. 376. For the usual contradiction see *Ogden*, I, 147.

99. "The *Virginus*. The Reasons for Keeping Cool About It," p. 333.

100. *Nation*, Nov. 27, 1873, p. 348. It is interesting to note in this connection that, despite the status of the South as a belligerent during the Civil War, Godkin and his associates persisted after the war in referring to Confederate naval commander Raphael Semmes as a "pirate." *Nation* (1865), July 6, p. 1; July 13, p. 61; *ibid.*, (1866), May 28, pp. 673, 674; Sept. 20, p. 222; Oct. 11, p. 282; Nov. 22, p. 402.

101. "How Should We Fight Spain?" *Nation*, Dec. 4, 1873, p. 364.

102. *Ibid.*

103. *Ibid.* For confirmation of this fact, see Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Rise of American Naval Power*, pp. 165-182.

104. "How Should We Fight Spain?" p. 364.

105. See *The United States Army and Navy Journal and Gazette*, Jan. 13, 1873, p. 366; Dec. 13, 1873, p. 282; March 21, 1874, p. 504; Dec. 26, 1874, pp. 312-314; Jan. 22, 1876, p. 383. The situation had not improved any when, eight years later, *Puck*, the humor magazine, cartooned Secretary of the Navy Hunt at the head of the American fleet — "three mud-scows supplemented by a superannuated canal-boat." *Puck*, Sept. 14, 1881, cited in George T. Davis, *A Navy Second to None* (New York, 1940), p. 19.

106. "How Should We Fight Spain?" p. 364.

107. *Ibid.*

108. See Godkin letters and editorials for the *Evening Post*, reprinted in the *Nation*: "Navalism," Jan. 21, 1892, p. 44; "Naval Politics," March 9, 1893, pp. 173-174; "The War Danger in 1892," May 18, 1893, pp. 360-361; "The Seapower," Sept. 15, 1898, pp. 198-199; "War as a Means of Peace," Nov. 1, 1900, pp. 344-345.

## NOTES CHAPTER SIX

1. James G. Blaine, *Political Discussions, Legislative, Diplomatic, and Popular, 1856-1886* (Norwich, Conn., 1887), p. 411.

2. "More of Mr. Blaine's International Law," *Nation*, March 30, 1882, p. 264.

3. See Chester L. Barrows, *William M. Evarts* (Chapel Hill, 1941), Chapter 24; Diego Barros Arana, *Histoire de la Guerre du Pacifique* (Paris, 1881), Part II, Chapter VI.

4. Barrows, *op. cit.*, p. 374. Cf. Alice Tyler, *The Foreign Policy of James G. Blaine* (Minneapolis, 1927), pp. 109-110; H. C. Evans, *Chile and its Relations with the United States* (Durham, 1927), Chapter VIII. The documents are in *Foreign Relations* (1881), pp. 114-124; and *Sen. Exec. Doc.* No. 26, 46 Cong., 3 Sess., vol. I.

5. *Foreign Relations* (1881), p. 909. Instructions of May 9, 1881.

6. The official position of Blaine, as reflected in his instructions to United States representatives abroad, is accurately presented in Blaine, *Political Discussions*, pp. 343-372. The complete correspondence is in *Sen. Exec. Doc.* No. 79, 47 Cong., 1 Sess.

7. "More of Mr. Blaine's International Law," p. 264.

8. *Ibid.* This charge was based on Blaine's instructions of December 1, 1881, to the veteran diplomat, William H. Trescott. In them Blaine had stipulated that if that envoy should determine that Chile had acted from motives of hostility to the United States in setting aside the Garcia Calderon government, *which he, Blaine, did not anticipate*, he was to say that the United States regarded it as an "intentional and unwarranted offense" — "an act of such unfriendly import as to require the immediate suspension of all diplomatic intercourse." *Foreign Relations* (1881), p. 142. Instructions of Dec. 1, 1881.

9. "More of Mr. Blaine's International Law," p. 264. See Barros Arana, *op. cit.*, Part II, 112; Osborn to Evarts, March 5, 1880, MSS, Dept. of State, cited in J. B. Lockey, "James Gillespie Blaine," in Bemis, *American Secretaries*

of *State and their Diplomacy*, VII, 283; Osborn to Evarts, Sept. 14, 1881, cited in *Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 79*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 87.

10. "More of Mr. Blaine's International Law," p. 264. For the dispatch on which Godkin's highly colored interpretation was based, see *Foreign Relations* (1881), p. 914. Instructions of June 15, 1881.

11. "The Landreau Claim," *Nation*, Oct. 2, 1884, p. 281.

12. Philip M. Brown, "Frederick T. Frelinghuysen" in Bemis, *op. cit.*, VIII, 329.

13. See Edward Stanwood, *James G. Blaine* (New York, 1905), p. 241.

14. *Nation*, Dec. 15, 1881, p. 461. Cited in Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 3. However, Professor Brown is apparently in error in attributing the sentence as quoted to the *Nation*.

15. "The Landreau Claim," p. 281.

16. *Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 79*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess. The correspondence which Frelinghuysen handed over, together with supporting documents, totalled 742 printed pages.

17. "Blaine-Belmont," *Nation*, May 4, 1882, p. 374.

18. *Ibid.* For the testimony and other features of the investigation, see *House Report No. 1790*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess.

19. "The Blair Tale," *Nation*, May 11, 1882, pp. 394-395.

20. "The Landreau Claim," p. 281.

21. "The Blair Tale," p. 394.

22. "The Landreau Claim," p. 281.

23. See discussion in *Nation*, July 31, 1879, p. 72.

24. See *Congressional Record*, March 22, 1880, pp. 1775-1777. de Lesseps came to the United States early in 1880 to seek support for the scheme. For editorial comment by the *Nation* on the visit, see *ibid.*, Feb. 26, 1880, p. 146; March 4, 1880, p. 165; March 11, 1880, p. 185; Dec. 23, 1880, p. 434.

25. *Ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1880, p. 90. Similar sentiments were expressed in the *North American Review* (CXXX, 1880, 499-511).

26. *Nation*, Feb. 5, 1880, p. 90; *ibid.*, p. 88.

27. *Ibid.*, July 31, 1879, p. 72.

28. Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, VI, 4537. For the approval which the *Nation* gave to the remarks, see "The Week," March 11, 1880, p. 185.

29. Dexter Perkins finds the *Nation* arguing both pro and con on the applicability of the Monroe Doctrine to the Panama Canal. Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1867-1907* (Baltimore, 1937), p. 98.

30. Richardson, *op. cit.*, VI, 4601; *House Report No. 1121*, 46 Cong., 2 Sess., p. 7. *Ibid.*, No. 224, 46 Cong., 3 Sess., pp. 1-40.

31. "The Week," *Nation*, April 22, 1880, p. 298.

32. "Mr. Blaine's Method and Mr. Frelinghuysen's," *ibid.*, June 15, 1882, p. 496.

33. See *Foreign Relations* (1881), p. 537. It was this letter which touched off the controversy with England. In it Blaine warned the European nations collectively away from the Isthmus. His grounds were that the treaty of

1846 with Colombia secured to the United States paramount rights in that region. See Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, IV, 2361.

34. "Mr. Blaine's Method and Mr. Frelinghuysen's," p. 496.

35. "More of Mr. Blaine on the Isthmus Canal," *Nation*, Dec. 7, 1882, p. 481.

36. *Ibid.*, "The Nicaragua Canal," Dec. 18, 1884, p. 516; "The Administration and the Treaties," Dec. 25, 1884, p. 538.

37. M. W. Williams, *Anglo-American Isthmian Diplomacy* (Washington, 1916), p. 286.

38. "The Nicaragua Canal," p. 516.

39. Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine*, p. 211.

40. "The Nicaragua Canal," p. 516.

41. *Ibid.*

42. "The Canal Treaty," *Nation*, Dec. 25, 1884, p. 538.

43. *Ibid.*

44. "The Nicaragua Canal," p. 516.

45. "The Canal Treaty," p. 538.

46. "The Administration and the Treaties," p. 538.

47. "Some Truths About Canals," *Nation*, Feb. 5, 1885, p. 112. This was the position taken by President Cleveland in a special message to the Senate the following month in which he took the unusual step of withdrawing the Nicaragua treaty. Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, VII, 4888.

48. "Some Truths About Canals," p. 112. This was intended as an answer to the popular argument against the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, that is, that it was necessary for the United States to control and fortify any canal which might be constructed in order to insure against its use by the British fleet in the event of war between the two countries. See, for example, the Blaine interview in the *Washington Post*, Dec. 4, 1882. Cited in "More of Mr. Blaine on the Isthmus Canal," p. 481.

49. "Some Truths About Canals," p. 112.

50. Seward, Fish, Blaine, Foster, Olney, and Hay. Later Godkin elevated Seward to the company of Webster, Marcy, and Evarts, who were in his estimation the great American Secretaries of State.

51. "Mr. Foster on International Treaties," *Nation*, Dec. 18, 1884, p. 517.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*

54. "The United States and Mexico," *ibid.*, Jan. 12, 1882, p. 27. Compare with Godkin's "agrarian people" characterization, p. 47 herein.

55. *Congressional Record*, Jan. 9, 1882, p. 294.

56. "The United States and Mexico," p. 27.

57. *Ibid.*

58. B. H. Williams, *American Diplomacy, Policies and Practice* (New York, 1936), p. 19.



59. See Otto Graf Zu Stolberg-Wernigerode, *Germany and the United States of America During the Era of Bismarck* (Reading, 1937).

60. By the terms of the General Act, the International Association of the Congo was recognized as an independent state, the slave trade was prohibited, and the Congo Basin dedicated to free trade. In addition, agreements were reached on formalities to be observed in future occupations of territory along the coast of Africa. See Jesse S. Reeves, *The International Beginnings of the Congo Free State*, Johns Hopkins University Studies, 12th Series, Nos. XI-XII (Baltimore, 1894), and A. B. Keith, *The Belgian Congo and the Berlin Act* (Oxford, 1919). For official correspondence relating to the participation of the United States at the Berlin Conference, see *Sen. Exec. Doc.* No. 196, 49 Cong., 1 Sess., p. 7 *et seq.*

61. "A Strange Proceeding," *Nation*, Jan. 1, 1885, p. 8.

62. "More About the Congo Conference," *ibid.*, Jan. 8, 1885, p. 27. Godkin's hostility to American participation in international gatherings extended to the Pan American movement as well.

63. *Ibid.*

64. Hayes, *Diary*, entry of Feb. 20, 1879, in C. R. Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes* (Columbus, 1924), III, 522-24. For the veto message, see Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, VI, 4466-72.

65. See C. C. Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard* (New York, 1940), p. 129. For the contents of a resolution setting forth the "commercial value" of the Chinese laborers adopted by the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, see *New York Times*, Feb. 28, 1879.

66. *Nation*, Dec. 30, 1880, p. 453.

67. *Nation*, Dec. 9, 1880, p. 402. For other comment on the Morey Letter case, see *ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1880, p. 297; Nov. 4, 1880, p. 316; Nov. 18, 1880, p. 349.

68. "The Republican Party and the Chinese Bill," *ibid.*, March 16, 1882, p. 222.

69. *Ibid.*

70. *Ibid.* Godkin was apparently referring to the requirement that qualified Chinese entrants (*i.e.*, non laborers) must bring with them a certificate defining their status. For the precise terms of the bill which was finally enacted, see Act of May 6, 1882, *U. S. Statutes at Large*, vol. 22, pp. 58-61; *ibid.*, vol. 23, pp. 115-118.

71. "The Proper Sieve for Immigrants," *Nation*, April 16, 1891, p. 312.

72. "The Decision on the Geary Act," *ibid.*, May 18, 1893, p. 358.

73. *The Education of Henry Adams* (New York, 1906), pp. 280, 336.

74. "The Proper Sieve for Immigrants," p. 312.

75. For Blaine's role in the controversy, see *Foreign Relations* (1881), pp. 523-532. Instructions of May 26, 1881, and June 2, 1881. The position of Frelinghuysen is fully stated in *ibid.*, (1882), p. 230.

76. "The Irish-American 'Suspects,'" *Nation*, March 30, 1882, p. 264. Godkin pointed out that the Irish Land League, which he termed "the most

troublesome Irish organization with which the British government has ever had to deal," could never have grown to its present strength without its American allies. Owing to support from the United States, "the population of Ireland is, for political purposes, nearer 10,000,000 than 5,000,000, and can give a dollar for English torment where forty years ago it could give only a cent." "England and the Irish-Americans," *ibid.*, March 29, 1883, p. 268.

77. "The Irish-American 'Suspects,'" p. 264.

78. *Ibid.*

79. Lockey, "Blaine," in Bemis, *American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy*, pp. 290-291.

80. As Blaine partisan Lockey points out: "He had an excellent opportunity to pose as the champion of American rights against British 'aggressions,' but he did not take advantage of it." *Ibid.*, pp. 287-290.

81. "The Dungeon Correspondence," *Nation*, April 13, 1882, p. 308.

82. *Ibid.* Compare with the actual correspondence as printed in *Foreign Relations* (1881), pp. 523-532. Godkin apparently had reference to the second instruction rather than the first, as stated.

83. "Earl Granville's Answer," *Nation*, May 11, 1882, p. 395.

84. "The Dungeon Correspondence," p. 308.

85. "Earl Granville's Answer," p. 395.

86. *Ibid.* See Blaine to Lowell, June 2, 1881, in *Foreign Relations* (1881) for the letter to which Godkin refers.

87. *New York Herald*, May 19, 1882. The *Nation* erred in saying that the *Herald* had carried "a series of articles" demanding Lowell's recall. See *Herald*, May 24, 1882.

88. "Mr. Lowell and the Irish," *Nation*, May 25, 1882, p. 438.

89. *Ibid.*

90. "The Reasons Why Mr. Lowell Should Be Recalled," *ibid.*, June 1, 1882, p. 457.

91. "Mr. Lowell and the Irish," p. 438.

92. *Ibid.*

93. "England and the Irish-Americans," p. 268.

94. *Ibid.*

95. *Economist* (London), April 28, 1883, p. 486.

96. "The Irish Conspirators and the American Government," *Nation*, May 17, 1883, p. 419.

97. *Ibid.*, p. 420.

98. The case duplicated the famous Condon incident of 1877. See *Foreign Relations* (1878), pp. 258, 278, 280.

99. "Mr. Hewitt's Explanation," *Nation*, Jan. 17, 1884, p. 48.

100. *Ibid.*

101. "The Irish-American 'Suspects,'" p. 265. Cf. "Earl Granville's Answer," p. 395.

102. "The Dungeon Correspondence," p. 308. Compare with the following that the editor wrote in 1889: "It ought to be known even in primary schools that when an American commits murder or robbery in any foreign country of Christendom, the power of interference possessed by our Government is limited to seeing that he is brought to a speedy trial, that he is allowed full communication with his counsel and his friends, that the trial is fairly conducted according to the procedure of the country, that the punishment is not cruel or unusual, and that confession is not extorted by any species of torture or persecution." "The Maybrick Case," *Nation*, Aug. 15, 1889, p. 125.

103. *Times* (London), Feb. 29, 1884, Cf. *ibid.*, March 1-11, 1884.

104. New York *Herald*, March 9, 1884.

105. "Catching the Dynamiters," *Nation*, March 20, 1884, p. 248.

106. *Ibid.*

107. "The United States and the Dynamiters," *ibid.*, Jan. 29, 1885, p. 88.

108. See Allan Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, pp. 870-871; Claude Bowers and Helen Dwight Reid, "William M. Evarts," in Bemis, *op. cit.*, VII, 257-322; L. B. Shippee, "Thomas Francis Bayard," in *ibid.*, p. 68. Cf. C. C. Tansill's encyclopaedic *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard*, pp. xxxiii-xxxvi.

109. The fugitives were wanted in the United States for offenses which were technically non-extraditable. Among them were a large-scale smuggler and swindler named C. L. Lawrence and a forger named Winslow.

110. In July, 1876, *Punch*, the English humor magazine, featured a cartoon which depicted Uncle Sam and John Bull in the act of tearing apart the Extradition Treaty of 1842, with Justice, represented by a fair woman, interposing to say "Stop, Gentlemen! You've both of you too many Rogues loose, to do without that!" *Punch*, July 1, 1876, p. 267.

111. "The Extradition Treaty," *Nation*, May 25, 1876, p. 331.

112. *Ibid.*

113. *Ibid.*

114. *Ibid.*, pp. 331-332.

115. For the highlights of its negotiation, see Tansill, *op. cit.*, pp. xxxiii-xxxvi.

116. W. S. Holt, *Treaties Defeated by the Senate* (Baltimore, 1933), pp. 142-143.

117. *Nation*, June 5, 1884, p. 484; July 22, 1886, p. 65; August 12, 1886, p. 130 (editorial by Horace White); Dec. 28, 1882, p. 541; Jan. 18, 1883, p. 46; *ibid.*, pp. 480-481 (article by Arthur G. Sedgwick); June 12, 1884, p. 502 (Sedgwick); July 17, 1884, pp. 48-49 (Sedgwick); Dec. 19, 1889, p. 486.

## NOTES CHAPTER SEVEN

1. The one notable exception being his memorable break with Cleveland during the Venezuelan crisis with England in 1895.

2. See C. C. Tansill, *The Foreign Policy of Thomas F. Bayard* (New York, 1940), pp. xviii, xix, xx, xxi, 142, 272, 273, 274, 652. See also *Cleveland Papers*, Library of Congress, Godkin to Cleveland, March 24, 1891; Godkin to Cleveland, April 11, 1885.

3. White to Bayard, March 13, 1886, cited in Tansill, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

4. White to Bayard, Aug. 10, 1889, *ibid.*, p. 652.

5. Godkin to Cleveland, Feb. 26, 1885, *Cleveland Papers*. Godkin later found reason to praise the official in question, Secretary of the Treasury Daniel Manning; see Allan Nevins, *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Courage* (New York, 1933), p. 231.

6. Godkin to Bayard, March 13, 1885, cited in Tansill, *op. cit.*, p. xxi. Cf. Godkin to Lamont, March 12, 1885, and March 20, 1885. *Cleveland Papers*.

7. Godkin to Cleveland, April 5, 1893. *Cleveland Papers*. Cf. Allan Nevins, *Henry White* (New York, 1930), p. 74. Lawrence Godkin, son of the editor, told White shortly afterwards that his father regarded his dismissal as the one regrettable act of the new Cleveland Administration. (*Ibid.*, p. 100.) Godkin apparently no longer attached importance to the much criticized Van Alen appointment, involving the alleged sale of a diplomatic appointment, which he himself had editorially denounced in the *Nation*. For the details of the case, see Nevins, *Cleveland*, p. 518, and Godkin, "The Van Alen Case," *Nation*, Oct. 5, 1893, pp. 240-241. For Godkin's protests to Cleveland on the appointment, see Godkin to Cleveland, April 5, 1893, and Godkin to Honey, April 29, 1893. *Cleveland Papers*.

8. For the details of the complicated case, see Tansill, *op. cit.*, pp. 579-611.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 591-595; Henry M. Wriston, *Executive Agents in American Foreign Relations* (Baltimore, 1929), pp. 815-817. For a defense of Sedgwick by the *Nation*, see "The Week," Sept. 16, 1886, p. 225. For Godkin's introduction of Sedgwick to Washington officialdom, see Godkin to Garfield, Jan. 9, 1877. *Garfield Papers*.

10. See "The Tariff and the Consuls," *Evening Post*, Nov. 4, 1893; "Good Work for 'Good Americans,'" *Nation*, April 5, 1894, pp. 247-248.

11. "A Great Scandal," *Nation*, Dec. 30, 1886, p. 536.

12. *Ibid.*

13. In this connection see Tyler Dennett, *John Hay* (New York, 1933), pp. 401-402, and H. E. Davis, "The Citizenship of Jon Perdicaris," in the *Journal of Modern History*, XIII (1941), 517-526.

14. There are several good secondary accounts of this dispute. Especially useful are C. C. Tansill, *Bayard*, Chapters 14 and 15; J. B. Henderson, *American Diplomatic Questions* (New York, 1901), Chapter I; and, for the later phase, T. A. Bailey, "The North Pacific Sealing Convention of 1911," *Pacific Historical Review*, IV (1935), 2.

15. Among them were ex-minister to England E. J. Phelps and Andrew D. White. See the Phelps article in *Harper's LXXXII* (1891), 766-774.

16. "Mr. Phelps on Mr. Blaine," *Nation*, March 26, 1891, p. 253. Cf. "Some Hawaiian Oddities," *ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1894, pp. 60-61.

17. "Humorous Diplomacy," *ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1891, p. 62. Cf. "Mr. Blaine's *Tu-quoques*," *ibid.*, May 14, 1891, pp. 396-397.

18. *Nation*, Aug. 17, 1893, p. 113. The chief counsel for Great Britain in the arbitration, Sir Charles Russell and Godkin were intimate friends. See *Ogden*, II, 26, 138, 143-145, 155-159, 216, 252.

19. "The Barrundia Debate," *Nation*, Feb. 19, 1891, p. 150.

20. *Ibid.* Cf. "The Barrundia Case," *ibid.*, Jan. 15, 1891, p. 44; "The Reiter Fog," Jan. 29, 1891, p. 84; "What the Barrundia Case Calls For," Feb. 26, 1891, p. 172; "Secretary Tracy's Duty," April 30, 1891, p. 354. The State Department correspondence is in *Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 50*, 51 Cong., 2 Sess., and that from the Navy Department in *House Exec. Doc. No. 51*, 51 Cong., 2 Sess. For additional references see Alice Tyler, *The Foreign Policy of James G. Blaine*, p. 105n.

21. On March 14, 1891, eleven persons of Italian descent were dragged from jail by a mob of enraged citizens and lynched as an aftermath to the "unsolved" murder of the New Orleans chief of police. Presumably the *Mafia* (Black Hand) society had been responsible for the murder but no convictions were obtained. It was then that the people of the city determined to take matters into their own hands. See J. E. Cox, "The New Orleans *Mafia* Incident," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XX (1937), 108f.

22. "The Italian Trouble," *Nation*, April 9, 1891, p. 294. For an earlier mentioned factor which had an important bearing on the attitude of Godkin, see p. 151 herein.

23. See Osgood Hardy, "The *Itata* Incident," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, V (1922), 195-226. The correspondence over the incident is in *House Exec. Doc. No. 91*, 52 Cong., 1 Sess.

24. "The *Itata* Case," *Nation*, May 21, 1891, p. 416.

25. *Ibid.*

26. See Blaine to Lazcano, March 13, 1891, *House Exec. Doc. No. 91*, 52 Cong., 1 Sess., 197; and Tyler, *The Foreign Policy of James G. Blaine*, pp. 139-140.

27. Cited in "The *Alabama* Precedent," *Nation*, May 21, 1891, p. 416.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 417.

29. "More of Mr. Blaine's International Law," *Nation*, March 30, 1882, p. 264.

30. "The Chilian Conflict," *Nation*, March 5, 1891, p. 190.

31. "Balmaceda's Defense," *ibid.*, June 4, 1891, p. 455.

32. "The Chilian Situation," *ibid.*, June 18, 1891, p. 492. Cf. "Balmaceda's Defense," pp. 454-455.

33. For the sake of clarity, it should be emphasized that the dates used here apply only to the *Nation*. The same editorial had appeared several days earlier in the *Evening Post*. There was a lag of from two to seven days



between the *Post* original and the *Nation* reprint. Sometimes Godkin's editorials were printed three times within the same week—once in the *Evening Post*, once in its semi-weekly edition, and once in the *Nation*.

34. "Our Treatment of Chili," *Nation*, Oct. 29, 1891, p. 326.
35. "The Chilian News," *ibid.*, Nov. 5, 1891, p. 348.
36. "Our Treatment of Chili," p. 327.
37. "The Chilian News," p. 348; "Our Treatment of Chili," p. 326.
38. "The Democratic House and War with Chili," *Evening Post*, Jan. 7, 1892. Cf. William E. Curtis, *From the Andes to the Ocean* (New York, 1907), p. 409.
39. "The Chilian News," p. 349.
40. "Our Treatment of Chili," p. 326.
41. T. C. Crawford, *James G. Blaine* (Philadelphia, 1893), p. 617.
42. "Our Treatment of Chili," pp. 326-327.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 327.
44. "The Chilian News," p. 348.
45. See A. B. Hart, "The Chilean Controversy," in *Practical Essays in American Government* (New York, 1905), p. 111, and John Bassett Moore, "The Chilean Affair," *Political Science Quarterly*, VIII (Sept., 1893), 467 ff.
46. Nevins, *Henry White*, p. v. Cf. Osgood Hardy, "Was Patrick Egan a 'Blundering Minister'?" *Hispanic American Historical Review*, VIII (1928), 65-81.
47. "The Secret of Warriorism," *Evening Post*, March 17, 1892.
48. *Ibid.*
49. "The Proper Use of a Country," *Nation*, Nov. 26, 1891, p. 402.
50. "The Secret of Warriorism." An interesting sidelight to the controversy was the Bridgeport incident in January, 1892. Godkin later described it as follows: "During the Chilian trouble, some one started the notion in Bridgeport Conn., that it was an 'insult' for a foreign vessel to come into an American port flying any flag but the stars and stripes. Within a day or two in came a British ship flying the union jack. Instant preparations were made by the local patriots to board her and mob the captain. Before the eruption actually took place, however, some one suggested telegraphing to the State Department to find out whether it was an insult or not for a foreign vessel to fly her own flag in our ports." *Nation*, Dec. 26, 1895, p. 460. For a somewhat different contemporary version of the affair, see *Times* (London), Feb. 2, 1892.
51. "The Secret of Warriorism."
52. "Concerning War as a Remedy," *Evening Post*, Jan. 25, 1892.
53. *Ibid.*
54. See W. R. Sherman, *The Diplomatic and Commercial Relations of the United States and Chile, 1820-1914* (Boston, 1926), pp. 187-188.
55. "The Shame of It," *Evening Post*, Jan. 29, 1892.
56. *Ibid.*
57. "Hawaii," *Evening Post*, Feb. 3, 1893.

58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.* Cf. Godkin to Atkinson, March 1, 1895. *Atkinson Papers*, Massachusetts Historical Society.
60. "The Hawaiian Message," *Evening Post*, Dec. 19, 1893.
61. "General Harrison on Hawaii," *ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1893; "'Americanism,'" *ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1893. For the reaction of Godkin to the events leading up to the actual annexation five years later, see *Nation*, "Jamming Through," Dec. 9, 1897, pp. 448-449; "The Momentous Decision," Dec. 16, 1897, pp. 468-469; "Straight Lines," Jan. 13, 1898, p. 23-24; "More Bureau," Jan. 27, 1898, p. 63.
62. *Literary Digest*, May 26, 1894, p. 95.
63. "The Samoan Troubles," *Nation*, May 17, 1894, p. 359.
64. "'Scuttling' Out of Samoa," *ibid.*, May 24, 1894, p. 380. Cf. "Our Samoan Trouble," *ibid.*, June 28, 1894, pp. 480-481.
65. See *ibid.*, "The Van Alen Case," Oct. 5, 1893, pp. 240-241; "The Tariff and the Consuls," Nov. 9, 1893, p. 340; "The Nomination of Mr. Peckham," Jan. 25, 1894, p. 61, *et. seq.*; "Good Work for 'Good Americans,'" April 5, 1894, pp. 247-248; "The Consular Reform," Sept. 26, 1895, p. 218.
66. See P. R. Fossum, "The Anglo-Venezuelan Boundary Controversy," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, VIII (1928), 299-329.
67. From unpublished manuscript by the writer based upon an examination of microfilmed British Foreign Office records and Venezuelan documents. Cf. British Blue Books, *Correspondence Respecting the Question of the Boundary of British Guiana* (London, 1896), I, 17, 26, 241-246.
68. See "Change Without Variety," *Nation*, March 12, 1896, p. 211. Among the official acts of Gresham which met with the approval of Godkin was his refusal to interfere in the British invasion of Nicaragua in 1895. It was in the course of the dispute which arose that the *Evening Post* distributed in pamphlet form an essay by John Bassett Moore purporting to show that the Monroe Doctrine had no application to the affair. ("The Monroe Doctrine, its Origin and Meaning," New York, *Evening Post* Publishing Company, 1895.)
69. Gresham to Bayard, March 31, 1895, cited in Tansill, *Bayard*, p. 695.
70. *Foreign Relations* (1895) I, 558.
71. *Congressional Record*, Dec. 10, 1895, pp. 108-112.
72. Cited in *Nation*, Dec. 19, 1895, p. 441.
73. The message is printed in *Foreign Relations* (1895), I, 545.
74. Cited in *Nation*, Dec. 26, 1895, p. 456.
75. See Richard Hooker, *The Story of an Independent Newspaper* (New York, 1924), pp. 165-166.
76. *Nation*, Dec. 5, 1895, p. 399.
77. *Ibid.*, Dec. 12, 1895, p. 420; "Union for Cleveland," *ibid.*, Dec. 19, 1895, pp. 441-442.
78. "The Week," *ibid.*, Dec. 26, 1895, p. 456.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 455-456.

80. *Ibid.*, p. 455.
81. James E. Pollard, *The Presidents and the Press* (New York, 1947), p. 514, *et. seq.*
82. "The Week," *Nation*, Dec. 26, 1895, p. 455.
83. "Patriotism and Finance," *ibid.*, Dec. 26, 1895, p. 460.
84. *Ibid.*
85. See especially the articles by Andrew Carnegie and James Bryce in the *North American Review*, CLXII (1896), 144, 153.
86. Godkin to Norton, Dec. 29, 1895, cited in *Ogden*, II, 202. A long time associate of Godkin, Joseph Bucklin Bishop, has written of that editor: "Never was his enjoyment of a 'row' keener than when he himself was the object of attack, as was very often the case. He would read all the hard things said of him in one paper after another, fairly shaking with pleasure, and then say: 'What a delightful lot they are! We must stir them up again.'" Bishop, "Edwin L. Godkin," in *Notes and Anecdotes of Many Years* (New York, 1925), p. 93.

## NOTES CHAPTER EIGHT

1. J. B. Bishop, *Notes and Anecdotes of Many Years* (New York, 1925), p. 107. Cf. "Morality in Diplomacy," *Nation*, April 2, 1891, p. 277.
2. For first hand glimpses of Godkin in the Crimean War, see his letters to the *Daily News* (London), Dec. 1853-1854, in Rollo Ogden, *Life and Letters of Edwin Lawrence Godkin* (New York, 1907), I, 22-108, and Sir J. A. Crowe, *Reminiscences of My Life* (London, 1895), pp. 117, 122-124, 142. Similarly, compare his letter on Admiral Farragut in 1864 (*Ogden, op. cit.*, I, 216) with the sentiments expressed in "Fictitious War," *Nation*, March 29, 1894, p. 225.
3. "Navalism," *ibid.*, Jan. 21, 1892, p. 44.
4. "'Americanism,'" *ibid.*, Feb. 23, 1893, p. 137.
5. *Bookman*, XXII (1905), 244.
6. "Change Without Variety," *Nation*, March 12, 1896, p. 211.
7. O. G. Villard, *Some Newspapers and Newspapermen* (New York, 1923), p. 291. The only Godkin utterance of this specific character that the present writer has encountered differs materially from the undocumented version of Villard. In 1898 Godkin opposed conscripting youths from upper class American families for military service on the grounds that the "killing of public enemies," though a perfectly legitimate calling, was nevertheless the "meanest office in any state after that of the public executioner." ("The Conscription," *Nation*, Dec. 29, 1898, p. 478.)
8. "Peace," *Nation*, Dec. 29, 1870, p. 434.
9. "The 'Virginus.' The Reasons for Keeping Cool About It," *ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1873, p. 334.
10. A. V. Dicey, "An English Scholar's Appreciation of Godkin," *ibid.*, July 8, 1915, p. 52.

11. Two incidents which, while widely separated in time, when bracketed together form one of the more delightful illustrations of Godkin's mercurial disposition were the following: Late in 1865 a world-wide outbreak of the cholera neared the shores of the United States. Godkin watched its progress from his editorial chair in New York City with tense interest. By November the *Nation* was excitedly denouncing the New York City Board of Health — "which at such a crisis ought to reign supreme" — as a body too "disreputable" to act. Whereupon the board, in admittedly dictatorial fashion, instituted a rigid quarantine of the Port of New York. The bitter protests of those quarantined went unheeded by the *Nation*, as Godkin and his associates reversed their earlier judgment and applauded the health body for its "wholesome tyranny." (See *Nation*, I [1865], 514, 577, 641; II [1866], 513, 520, 577, 594, 625, 690, 705, 770.) Some years later, in the severe cholera epidemic of 1892, the same drama was re-enacted. Only this time it was Godkin, who had just returned from one of his yearly junkets to Europe, who found himself in quarantine in New York harbor. His personal comfort at stake, the publicist resorted to some of his choicest editorial invective in protest of his incarceration. Allan Nevins has somewhat one-sidedly described it: "His letters to the *Evening Post* [from quarantine] were delightfully scorching, he kept up the attack till the quarantine officers were panic-stricken, and he demolished their last defense in an article in the *North American Review* that is a masterpiece of destructiveness." (Nevins, *The Evening Post*, p. 535); Godkin, "A Month of Quarantine," *North American Review*, CLV (1892), 737-743.

12. "What is the Use of International Law?" *Nation*, March 13, 1869, p. 368.

13. "Peace," pp. 433-434.

14. A. C. Beales, *The History of Peace* (New York, 1931), pp. 137-138.

15. "The Meetings at the Hague," *Nation*, Oct. 14, 1875, pp. 241-242. Associations for the advancement of international law were not only useless, according to Godkin, but dangerous, especially when infiltrated by representatives of a foreign power with ulterior motives. He pointed in this connection to the endorsement given by the Institute of International Law to a proposal by Russia that the use of irregular troops in wartime be banned — a thinly disguised move, it seemed to him, to "place Providence definitively on the side of the heaviest battalions . . ."

16. *Ibid.*, p. 242.

17. "The Extradition Treaty," *Nation*, May 25, 1876, p. 331.

18. "The Work for Peace Societies," *Nation*, Nov. 7, 1878, p. 281.

19. See G. P. Gooch, *History of Modern Europe* (New York, 1923), p. 31, and W. E. Lunt, *History of England* (New York, 1945), p. 710.

20. "Arbitration," *Nation*, May 7, 1885, p. 377.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 377-378.

22. *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (New York, 1913), p. 202. A "malignant and dishonest liar" and "traitor to the country" were among the harder Roosevelt characterizations of Godkin. (E. E. Morison, ed., *Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* [Cambridge, 1951-1953], I, 74, 1368.) The two men began feuding in 1884.

23. Cited in *Nation*, April 29, 1869, p. 327. The assertion of O. G. Villard that Godkin "was as devoted an American as ever lived" (*Fighting Years*, p. 119.), as well as Wendell Phillips Garrison's comment that he was "an American to the core" (*Nation*, May 22, 1902, p. 404.) are disputed by numerous personal letters. See Godkin to Miss Tuckerman, Sept. 1, 1898, MSS letter in New York Public Library, and letters in *Ogden*, II, 27, 28, 143, 214, 238. Cf. William Dean Howells, "A Great New York Journalist," *North American Review*, CLXXXV (1907), 45. Edward W. Randall intended to show how Godkin used the *Nation* as a sounding board for his Anglophilia in "Edwin Lawrence Godkin, Anglo-American" (unpublished master's thesis in Honnold Library, Claremont, California, 1947). At the same time it should not be forgotten that Godkin was capable of censuring England, especially in the early days. (See *Ogden*, II, 140; "The Tyranny of the Majority," *North American Review*, CIV [1867], 226.) In the *Trent* affair with England in 1861, he was vigorously pro-United States in the face of conservative British press hostility. (*Ogden*, I, 192, 197; *Times* [London], Dec. 3, 1861; *The Annual Register*, CIII [1861], 254; *Blackwood's Magazine*, XCI [1862], 123-127.)

24. See Godkin letters in *Ogden*, II, 138-168.

25. Godkin to Sedgwick, Aug. 16, 1897, *ibid.*, II, 214-215.

26. Quoted in Norman Angell, *America and the New World-State* (New York, 1915), pp. 194-195.

27. "Some Hawaiian Oddities," *Nation*, Jan. 25, 1894, pp. 60-61.

28. See, in addition to the references hereinafter cited, "Good Americans in Trouble," *ibid.*, April 6, 1899, p. 254; "Concerning 'Going to Europe,'" *ibid.*, April 26, 1894, pp. 307-308.

29. "Good Americans," *Evening Post*, Nov. 13, 1893.

30. "Americanism," *ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1893.

31. "Hawaii," *ibid.*, Feb. 3, 1893.

32. "'National Honor,'" *Nation*, Jan. 16, 1896, p. 47. Cf. "Navalism," p. 44.

33. Robert E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self Interest in America's Foreign Relations* (Chicago, 1953), p. 54. Copyright (1953) by the University of Chicago.

34. "'National Honor,'" p. 47.

35. "Navalism," p. 44. Godkin's remarks on this occasion appear to have been wholly inspired by the almost forgotten Barrundia affair of the previous year. See p. 167 herein.

36. "The War Danger in 1892," *Evening Post*, May 11, 1893.

37. "Naval Politics," *ibid.*, March 7, 1893. Cf. (letter) "'The Sea Power,'" *Nation*, Sept. 15, 1898, pp. 198-199; (letter) "War as a Means of Peace," *ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1900, pp. 344-345.

38. See especially Nevins, *The Evening Post*, pp. 496-568; Walter Millis, *The Martial Spirit* (Cambridge, 1931), pp. 29-30, 38-39, 110, 117, 198-199, 333, 406; Marcus W. Wilkerson, *Public Opinion and the Spanish-American War* (Baton Rouge, 1932), pp. 111, 123-127.

39. The *Nation Index* will convey the impression he wrote *more*. That is because more complete records of authorship have been preserved for the



later period. It is sufficient to say that of the almost 500 *Evening Post* editorials reprinted in the *Nation* between 1898 and 1900 Godkin wrote under 100, or a ratio of less than one in five. Horace White accounted for about the same number. J. B. Bishop and Arthur Sedgwick jointly added another twenty per cent. It was Rollo Ogden who dominated the scene, with nearly one-third of all editorials reprinted. The significance of these figures becomes apparent when it is realized that a larger proportion of Godkin's editorials, compared to those of his associates, found their way into the *Nation*.

40. Villard, *Some Newspapers and Newspapermen*, p. 53.

41. *Ogden*, II, 30.

42. "Come and Let Us Reason Together," *Nation*, Nov. 10, 1898, p. 344.

43. "Democratic Fatalism," *ibid.*, Dec. 1, 1898, p. 404.

44. *Ogden*, II, 218.

45. "The Conditions of Good Colonial Government," *Forum*, XXVII (1899), 190-203.

46. See his *Nation* editorials, "Expansionist Dreams," Jan. 26, 1899, p. 61; "Some Wholesome Restraints," Feb. 1, 1899, pp. 102-103; "The President's Popularity," April 6, 1899, p. 252; "*Imperium et Libertas*," May 18, 1899, pp. 368-369.

47. See "'Suspension of Judgment,'" March 17, 1898, pp. 199-200; "The War in Its Right Place," March 31, 1898, p. 238; "Deliberation," April 7, 1898, p. 258, all in *ibid.*

48. (letter) "Modern Christianity," *ibid.*, March 7, 1901, pp. 190-191.

49. Garrison to Godkin, Sept. 29, 1899, cited in *Ogden*, II, 224; *ibid.*, p. 243; Godkin to Villard, Oct. 2, 1899. *Villard Papers*, Harvard.

50. "The Clergy and War," *Nation*, Oct. 4, 1900, pp. 266-267. Cf. J. W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898* (Baltimore, 1936), Chapter VIII. In a letter to Bishop Huntington in October, 1900, Godkin lamented: "The disposition of the church almost everywhere to take pains not to rise above the morality of the crowd has been one of the afflictions of my later years." Godkin to Huntington, Nov. 13, 1899, cited in *Ogden*, II, 238.

51. "A Great Moral Catastrophe," *Nation*, March 2, 1899, pp. 158-159.

52. "'Chaos,'" *ibid.*, March 16, 1899, p. 196.

53. Godkin to Mrs. Bryce, Nov. 14, 1899, cited in *Ogden*, II, 238.

54. *Ogden*, II, 199, 202; Godkin, "The Growth and Expression of Public Opinion," *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXXI (1898), 9; Godkin to Scott, June, 1898. *Villard Papers*.

55. *Nation*, Feb. 24, 1898, p. 139. The next week the sale of the *Journal* reportedly topped five million copies.

56. *Ibid.*, March 3, 1898, p. 157.

57. *Evening Post*, March 17, 1898, cited in Wilkerson, *Public Opinion and the Spanish-American War*, p. 126.

58. "The New Political Force," *Nation*, May 5, 1898, p. 336. On the same subject see "The Growth and Expression of Public Opinion," p. 9.

59. For a list of letters republished in the *Nation*, see *Nation Index*.

60. By 1899 Godkin was in complete despair. "I have apparently to look elsewhere to keep even moderate hopes about the human race alive," he wrote to a friend as he prepared to abandon the United States. (*Ogden*, II, 237.) The same year he submitted to *Forum* an article critical of democracy which editor Walter Hines Page respectfully declined to publish because of what he termed its "hopeless" tone. In his letter Page admonished Godkin about seeking to promote schism in the ranks of the intelligentsia — between those who "criticise and predict disaster" and those "who must take these practical tasks in hand." (Page to Godkin, Jan. 31, 1899, as quoted in Burton J. Hendrick, *The Training of an American* [New York, 1928], p. 215.)

61. Entry in *Hayes Diary*, as quoted in C. R. Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Rutherford B. Hayes* (Columbus, 1922-1926), III, 609; IV, 3.

62. *History of the State of New York*, A. C. Flick, ed. (New York, 1937), IX, p. 295.

63. Nevins, *The Evening Post*, p. 535.

64. See, for example, Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, p. 149; *Grover Cleveland*, p. 608; *The Evening Post*, pp. 472, 505-506. The quotations which Professor Nevins attributes directly to Godkin therein are from articles and editorials identified by the *Nation Index* as the work respectively of J. C. Hurd, Rollo Ogden, and a writer as yet unknown.

65. This does not mean, however, that the present writer is in agreement with Joseph Dorfman in his recent, somewhat critical review of Alan P. Grimes' *Political Liberalism of the New York Nation, 1865-1932*. (*American Historical Review*, LIX [1954], p. 455.) Writes Dorfman: "Some of the inconsistencies and contradictions that Professor Grimes finds, especially in the [Godkin] period of the 'old liberalism' may be due to the fact that anonymity does not distinguish between one and more than one writer on the same issue. Certainly the reader would not gather from the author's account that such spokesmen for what became the 'new liberalism' in the Anglo-American world, such as A. V. Dicey, Richard T. Ely, and Henry Carter Adams, were among the contributors in the era of the 'old liberalism.'" Professor Dorfman, in advancing such a speculation, has done a disservice to scholarship. Probably no publication in the nineteenth century more accurately reflected the personality of one man than did the Godkin *Nation*. His inconsistencies ought by now to be well established. As for the assertion that Godkin criticizes Richard T. Ely and Henry Carter Adams were contributors to the old *Nation*, it belongs almost entirely to the realm of fantasy. That is, unless one chooses, as Dorfman apparently does, to regard several blistering Ely letters to the editor of that paper as "contributions." (See Haskell, *Nation Index: Contributors*, and the text of the *Nation* citations therein listed.)

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